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Mnemosyne.

BY DOUGLAS GARMAN.

LEUCOTHEA lay back in a deck chair staring at the faint line of the horizon. She had fled, then, from madness. Athamas, coming back unexpectedly from the chase, shaggy haired and with bloody hands, had pushed his way through the crowd of women where she sat, muttering in spasms of grunting laughter. He was looking for her, calling her name, but she dared not answer. She saw him snatch the child from its nurse and dash it against a pillar, tearing the flesh with his nails. As she stumbled in the darkness amongst the rocks on the shore she heard his high, screaming voice calling Leucothea, Leucothea. Richard had called like that last night. If he, too, were mad! The warm moon-white water closed round her like a silken sheath, swaying her gently in a voluptuous, effortless cadence. The silent foliage blown by deep-sea currents touched her body with clammy, shivering fingers, and shadows, flickering towards her through the glaucous light, hung over her with muttering jaws and slow, contemplative eyes. Why had he left her, then, when for the first time he was making love to her? He had pulled her hands roughly from his shoulder and stared angrily at her without speaking. But they could not escape her, those lovers that came sidling through the water with lolling heads and nerveless, gleaming limbs. They lay beside her in the unending twilight and watched her caresses with unforbidding eyes, and when she moved the bubbles rose from their hair

in wobbling flight or were caught in the weed like evanescent pearls. In the ecstasy of dissolution the sodden flesh broke from their bones and scattered in flaky clouds. That same sea where by the Boeotian coast she had drifted in the shallows, sucked at this withered shore. If he were mad. The slow waves swaying her in a vast gestation, had dropped her here inert and passionless.

The hem of his trousers down-turned by a bramble hid the worn heel of his dusty shoe. She watched him come : Athamas, her royal lover, democratised and illicit. A button hanging face downwards from his coat clicked and snickered with another at each stride. His shadow split the somnolent afternoon. The past, white limbs strewn upon the mocking sea, circled out of sight, leaving the present like a rigid poster disturbed by his abrupt intrusion. Leucothea watched without bewilderment the Sunny South come lazily to life ; the trees and hills assuming depth, the sea beginning to quiver in aeonic mirth.

. . . . . .

With raised hand gesticulating to his thoughts, Richard said sullenly :

" But I don't. You must let me explain at leisure, as it comes."

He lay back, digging a hole in the shingle for his elbow, and threw the stump of his cigarette to the edge of the water. Leucothea, swinging her hand over the side of her chair, caught a twig of brittle seaweed and snapped it between her fingers.

" O, if only," she said.

Below the firm arc of her buttock he stared at the pebbles frisking in the heat and the round green hump of an island set stolidly on the tideless sea. The côte d'azure, playground of the idle rich. He scratched his thigh through the hole in his pocket and yawned. The mimosas round the villa loosed slow-scented breath that hung like oil in the unmoving air.

" If only you could tell me what's the matter," Leucothea said.

He turned his eyes to the sky and watched a frog-like man kicking impotently in limpid, curling water.

" I watched two people drown last week," he said. " A soldier tried to save a woman, in boots and puttees and a

stomach full of food. She was committing suicide and he was drowned for interfering. They haven't found him yet. She was picked up by a boat, the water in her skirt kept her afloat. She haunts me sometimes, though I was too high up to see her properly. And you were drowned in this same sea—Leucothea, daughter of Cadmus, fleeing from the madness of her husband, plunged into the sea and became a goddess. I suppose you know the story ? "

She answered slowly :

" Of course. They used to tell it me when I was a child. Yes, I remember it."

His elbows cupped in shingle, Richard let fall his head still further backwards, his collar dragging at his neck, the blood surging in his temples, clouding his eyes that gazed dispassionately at the distant scene. Her body, posed in fear, a moment clinging to the rocks, borne on a falling rhythm to the unpeopled depths. He exhaled slowly through half-open lips and without moving said :

" Memory means nothing. Re-enactment only, or creation —poetry if you like. The I who last night kissed you, and whose vows you then believed, I know to be no longer I, but you who believe in memory would have him so, and your confusion is Love's heaven. If I shared that confusion, since you are willing, we might go together towards a superb and eventful future."

He paused to watch ironically Time's eager efflorescence and continued :

" You see, memory relies on continuity and so distorts, whereas poetry, taking no account of time, compounds past and future in a perpetual present. The mnemotechnic Desdemona should always be overcome by the poetic Othello. He strangled Cassio's trull, though she in that same moment died in utter chastity—virtue's forgiving and pathetic smile discountenanced by the tragic mask. She died uncomprehending, still listening to his story, swearing " 'twas strange, 'twas passing strange, 'twas pitiful, 'twas wondrous pitiful." But the Moor only rarely wins."

Leucothea interrupted him.

" But why should she die ? She was innocent."

Her question irritated him, obtruding on his thought an

actress-Desdemona, white-robed in flimsy chastity between the unsullied marriage sheets.

"O then let her live!" he exclaimed surlily. "The civic idol, garlanded with decency."

He stood up and walked a few paces to the edge of the sea. A white yacht gaily plumed with smoke was heading towards the island. The clamour of their gaiety did not reach him, but he heard the little waves plop sullenly against the banked and soggy weed. Behind him Leucothea with misty eyes revolved his anger. With suave persuasion she cajoled him.

"Richard, tell me, has this got anything to do with us?"

Her words reached him and passed on. He did not move. He heard her get up from her chair and felt her fingers on his sleeve. Yesterday, lying beneath the pines, he had felt the slow strokes of her fingers on his forehead, and their pressure on his eyes had darkened the vermillion patterns of his lids to sombre violet and shooting greens. That alien moment of content gleamed with cool radiance through the hot, lethargic air, a Cyclops eye of time.

"Her innocence," he said, "was an abstraction that his lust made to feed his anger at Cassio's mockery. He did not try to kill Cassio, but her—she was the culprit, Cassio his own hated wraith."

He turned his sneering smile obliquely to her tilted face and felt depression spread its fungoid growth upon his mind. The sky was pale with distempered heat. A lemon sun dripped into the water. In equidistant scorn morning and night disdained this sullen, panting hour. Night the black, unctuous pander had urged them softly to their tryst. O Richard, my dear, my dear!

"Tell me, Richard, are you still worrying about Lilly? Last night you said you didn't want to stay with her, that you would leave her. You are so morbid. Tell me."

His face darkened a moment as he saw the untidy head, laid in the moonlight on the pillow, burst into an angry flower of abuse. Then with a finger raised dramatically he blew through his nose a whisper of gibing mirth.

"I am not what I am. Iago's laughter flickers through the ages; the gentleman's antithesis."

"O Richard, don't pose, please."

Her voice was heavy with serious anguish.

" Why not ? The sustained pose is the earnest of sincerity —the individual's only weapon against the crowd. They live by inspiration—the unconsidered action swayed only by good feeling and the sleepy ghost of memory. The rigid matrix of existence drops them into the common ditch, the loving earth, the eternal nature-poetess whose lolling bosom suckles the crowd with milk of human kindness. Knee to chin they snuggle in the oozy darkness, and applaud each other with the universal, tasteless smile. But the poser has a single audience ; himself, his incorruptible self."

His anguish broke in lonely laughter.

Leucothea gripped his arm with both hands and with hidden eyes, pressing close against his side, said :

" If you would leave her and come away. She doesn't want you, she doesn't understand you, Richard."

He sighed, and his hand, lifted to touch her shoulder, shrank from her appealing voice.

" She doesn't even want to."

They stood side by side in spiritless silence. At half-past three, Lilly two hours awake, with bleared eyes questioned him, slopping her coffee on the crumpled sheet.

" Look, I must go."

" All right," she said, " if you must."

She looked at him with drawn eyes, the thin line of her mouth curving sadly at the corners, and added :

" But Richard, you will come back ? Won't you ? "

" What for ? It's no use," he said.

" You must, I want to see you."

An old man's tenor voice, mellow with fat living, sang to them from the steps of the villa.

" O hell ! your banker father. No, I can't come back."

In yellowing flannels the old man padded towards them on thick crêpe soles. Beneath the shadow of his panama the child lips pouted in a kindly smile. He took their arms with flaky, freckled hands and spoke above lazy ripples of good nature.

" Still jawing. Well, you are a couple. I'm just off to the club. Thought you might like a stroll, Richard. Now, if only you played tennis, my dear chap, you'd feel all the better

for it. You'll walk as far as the courts with me though ? "

" No, I'm sorry. I must get back," Richard said.

He turned away and shambled up the beach, his thin, loose figure shaken by the uneven path. The old man raised his hairless eyebrows in jovial reproach.

" Well, he's a funny beggar if you like. What's the matter with him, rushing off like that."

He stroked her cheek affectionately with square, moist fingers.

" Never mind, Lukie, he'll be back soon. He's a bit mad. I always said so. Can't be helped. I suppose you don't want a bit of a walk ? "

" No, thank you," she said.

She heard his padding footsteps dwindle to silence and lay back staring at the pewter sea.

. . . . . .

" Don't act so damned soft," Lilly said angrily. " It nearly went on my skirt. Come on, let's go before we get chucked out. Get the waiter, Dick."

Richard picked up the glass and rattled it on the brass-bound table.

Lilly dabbing powder on her moist, dahlia face, looked at him over her hand.

" Go on, call him. He's deaf," she said.

The waiter stood beside them piling the saucers on top of each other.

" Vingt-six, vingt huit. Ça fait trente-cinquante."

Richard pulled a handful of crumpled notes from his waistcoat and counted them slowly. The waiter picked them up, humbly smiling, nodding obsequiously his shining head, and tucked them into his case.

" How much did you give him ? Thirty-five ? Here, garçon," she called shrilly, " Louis. Donnez-moi deux francs —deux," she held up two fingers. " Anybody'd think you were a blooming millionaire. Merci. You dirty little rat, you," she said, picking up the coins.

She took Richard's hat from the less smiling waiter and brushed it with her glove.

"Here's your hat. Come on, and for God's sake walk straight."

"All right, all right," Richard said. "What shall we do? Let's go up on the cliff."

He turned and walked quickly, with an effort, through the narrow street. Beside him Lilly poured into his inattentive ears, from lips glistening and distorted with salve, a stream of irritable speech. She tugged heavily at his arm.

"Here, you aren't going to catch a train."

The moonlight lay like condensed milk spilt between the shadows on the rocky slope of hillside. Behind them the semi-circle of the harbour was chained with dully glittering lamps, below the waves lounged clumsily against hidden rocks. She lay beside him her head resting on his arm, looking up at him with sly, voluptuous eyes.

"An onomatopoeic kiss. With beaded bubbles winking at the brim," he said.

Lilly writhed in his arms, pushing his chest with her strong arms, and sniggered.

"Leave a poor girl alone. Go on, don't be soft, Dick. Somebody will come."

"Balls! We're British subjects. Noli me tangere, for Curzon's I am."

He felt the blood flooding his limbs and the knot tightening in his throat. He pressed harder against her weakening arms and inhaled the dusty odour of her hair and the sharp scent of the pines. With shut eyes her face stared up at him with curved, expectant lips. Her lazy chuckles of laughter uncurled and floated in the air. Below, in a patch of troubled water, Leucothea's hands, raised in a gesture of supplication, flapped once or twice like the wings of an alighting sea-gull, and sank.

Virgil the Sorcerer

By ROBERT GRAVES.

Virgil as the old Germans have related—
  Meaning a master-poet of wide fame ;
And yet their Virgil stands dissociated
  From the suave hexametrist of that name,

Maro, whose golden and lick-spittle tongue
  Served Cæsar's most un-Roman tyrannies,
Whose easy-flowing Georgics are yet sung
  As declamations in the academies—

Not Mantuan Virgil, but another, greater,
  Who at Toledo first enlarged his spells,
Virgil the mage and prestidigitator
  Armed with all power that flatters or compels.

He, says the allegory, once was thrown
  By envious dukes into a dungeon keep
Where vermin-scarred and wasting to the bone
  Men crouch in year-old filth and cannot sleep.

He beckoned then his bond-mates to his side,
  Commanding charcoal ; from a rusty grate
They fetched him charcoal. Once again he cried
  " Where is the coward, submissive to his fate

" Who will not launch with me on midnight air
  A ship of hope, through the cold clouds to skim ? "
They gazed at Virgil in a quick despair
  Knowing him mad ; yet gently humoured him ;

Quietly watched while on the prison-wall
  He scratched a galley, buoyant and well-found.
" Bring sticks for oars." They brought them at his call.
  " Up now and row ! " They stepped from solid
    ground,

Climbed into phantasy, and with a cheer
  Heaved anchor, bent their oars, pulled without stop,
Virgil was captain, Virgil took the steer
  And beached them finally on a mountain-top.

Here, without disillusion, all were free :
  Wrenching their fetters off they went their ways.
It was a feat, they swore, that could not be,
  Yet was indeed accomplished beyond praise.

What Virgil did can yet again be done:
  Poetry is a spell of furious power,
And there are many poets, I for one,
  Who in a drunken and far-seeing hour

Compute the seasons of their rising art;
  " By the fifth year from this, if all goes well,
I shall have confidence to make a start,
  Rousing my bond-mates to assist my spell.

" By the tenth year, if luck and skill prevail
  They will bring charcoal at my urgent call,
(But for such help the strongest art must fail)
  And I shall try the charcoal on the wall.

" And fifty years from now, if fortune holds,
  The ship I have drawn shall ride so purposeful,
The wind must belly out the foresail folds
  And the waves wap in sound against the hull.

" Then by the eightieth year, the fates being kind,
  A crew shall board her, stamping with delight.
A southern gale shall volley up behind
  And the round world shall marvel at our flight.

" One hundred years from now, if I still live
  We shall touch Ararat in our black ark.
We shall cast anchor there : my spells shall give
  Fruit after famine, sunrise after dark."

Vanity : for proud resolution droops.
We are not Virgils but one night in twenty :
When we should step our masts we trundle hoops :
Art is most rare though boasts of art are plenty.

Nor searching dated annals can we note
Confirming records of a sure ascension
By any pictured galley or long-boat
Raised by word-magic to a third dimension.

Did Virgil do what legend has related ?
Is Poetry in truth the queen of arts ?
Can we hope better than a sleek bald-pated
Self-laurelled Maro of agreeable parts ?

No, Time the limiter wears us to rags,
Aided by Doubt and Sloth, demons of spite,
Whose daily fouling soaks the dungeon flags
And splashes the long wall on which we write,

Till we at last grow filthy ; we condone
The unmoving present ; on a mound of mud
We squat red-eyed and wan, whittling a bone,
Vermined, the low gaol-fever in our blood.

A Tale from the Grave.

By IRA V. MORRIS.

IN an insignificant grey house in one of the many insignificant grey suburbs of London there breathes and stirs a man who for many years has ceased to live. He eats, sleeps, talks, and works, and not one of the few acquaintances who greet him casually in the street suspects for a moment that he is addressing a dead man ; if they knew, they would be filled with horror ; so maybe it is far better for me, the dead man, to pretend that I am still alive.

I want to tell about myself, it will be a relief ; and you will be interested to hear : it is a good story.

Let me first describe my house : I have often longed to poke fun at this ridiculous house. In appearance it differs very little from any one of the hundred thousand or so suburban houses about London ; but its likeness to the thirteen other houses on my block is yet more striking. The fact is, it is one of a group of houses that resemble each other brick for brick, such as can be seen in any one of the suburbs of London or Manchester or Philadelphia or Berlin.

Speaking exactly, my house, like each of the fourteen houses of the block, is only half a house : that is to say, it can only be considered as a complete structure when taken together with my neighbour's house, which comprises the left part of the building as a whole. I share with my neighbour half the smokestack, half the garden and half the doorstep of this building, and one can thus see that he and I are a little more than neighbours, and less than room-mates : I might incidentally remark that in our ten years' acquaintance we have never spoken more than six words to each other at the same time. The next house of the block on the other side is likewise joined to mine like Siamese twins ; but it is a relief that it has no part in my doorstep or smokestack. I am rather proud of this.

The plan of my house is that of a model suburban " villa." There are two rooms of importance : one known alternatively as parlour, sitting-room, smoking or drawing-room, and lounge ;

the second the master bedroom, where my wife and I sleep. This last room is directly above the other, and resembles it precisely in size, shape, and fixtures : I have measured both rooms and I know. There is a large bay window facing the street, with blue cretonne curtains, green shades, and shutters that work with considerable and increasing difficulty (I am speaking of both rooms now). The wall paper is a floral design, three pink roses with long stems, and so on *ad perpetuum*. This likewise is identical in both rooms. The carpets have a design of small squares, enclosed in circles, in turn enclosed by larger squares : they are similar except that that in the parlour is green, in the bedroom brown. From the geometrical middle point of the parlour's yellow ceiling hangs a large electric lamp with a green shade, fairly dark green on the outside and very pale on the inner edge, where the light has faded it : this lamp hangs at just the proper height for the bright unglazed bulbs to hurt one's eyes when one is trying to read. In one corner of the sitting-room stands an upright bookcase of polished mahogany, with four shelves of books and glass doors locked by a key, a type of bookcase which may be found advertised in the magazines for so many shillings and an odd number of pence. The door to this bookcase creaks loudly when one opens it, as does every other door in the house with the exception of that into the kitchen, which had become so bad that I was forced to oil it. A piano, always in need of tuning, stands awkwardly at the end of the room, and in the way of the bookcase. The furniture of this refined drawing-room is of blue plush, a set of which my wife is duly proud : she has already mentioned it in her will. There is an open fireplace with logs, but this is make-belief ; it is possible only to have a gas fire. The fenders of the fireplace, as well as the firing instruments, and for that matter everything else in the room, are remarkably uninteresting. The following pictures adorn the walls : three second-rate oil paintings of the nineteenth century French nature school, respectively depicting maidens bathing in a lake, maidens dancing in a wood, and maidens playing ball upon a lawn ; another oil painting by a man named Wilson of a waterfall ; a copy of a water colour by Maxfield Parish ; and, finally a badly-executed woodcut of a person I take to be Mr. Pickwick.

I trust I have not tired the reader with this possibly too

lengthy description of my parlour. Please remember that I have spent a considerable portion of my life in this very room, so it is understandable that I have formed a definite opinion of all its contents, and one can sympathise with my desire to communicate these opinions : they are not entirely without moment. Let me describe one more room, my bedroom, and leave the four others, my daughter's room, the dining-room, and so forth, to your imagination.

It is a large room, as I have already stated the exact duplicate of the sitting-room. The enormous double bed in which my wife and I sleep occupies one corner ; it is placed in such a position that the light from the window strikes your eyes in the morning, so that when you wake up they are sore and your head aches. I attribute largely to this the fact that I now wear glasses and that my eyesight is growing gradually worse. I have slept in this double bed not quite every night since my second marriage seventeen and a half years ago. I am an old man, I am resigned to my fate, yet even now it seems to me hard that towards the close of my life I am not allowed my own room, or at least my own bed. I have often proposed moving into the spare bedroom ; but at the very suggestion my wife becomes so upset that I am forced to give up the idea.

Besides the bed, which may be termed the *pièce de resistance*, there are in the room a dresser for my wife's and my clothes, six chairs, of which only two are ever used, and in the corner my secretary, where I keep letters and papers, and which I use as a working desk. Fortunately the bureau is large, for it has to hold not only the clothes we regularly wear, but likewise twenty-one extra suits of mine which I had made in case I should some time become too poor to order new clothes. I am an old man of sixty-four, and I have probably not more than twenty-one years to live at the most ; allowing for one fresh suit a year, they will last me. In my bedroom there hang four pictures : a small copy of the same Maxfield Parish picture that hangs below, two hunting scenes, and an imitation print entitled " Men Catching Salmon."

Outside the door of the garret, in the hallway at the head of the stairs, hangs a large oil painting, the only valuable article in the house. It is the portrait of my great-great-grandfather, the first Earl of Hume, a beautiful piece of work.

Each feature of the stern old face stands out as if hewn in granite ; the fine blue eyes gaze down at you, penetrating and understanding.

No one of my family dare mention the picture, for they know I will fly into a fury at once ; it is the only thing I possess that reminds me of the time when I was still alive.

When a man dies he ought not, like the Egyptians, drag his cherished memories to the grave. . . . . .

My day begins at seven o'clock with my wife shaking me by the shoulder and asking me how long I expect to lie in bed. As I never get to sleep till three or four I am tired and feel like resting a while, but after listening to her grinding voice for a moment I become fully awake ; moreover, the bright sunshine shines full in my eyes, so I get up, dress quickly, and go downstairs. I sit down and begin reading a book, but before long my wife comes into the room, still doing up her hair and begins talking to me ; when I continue to read she heaves a deep sigh, exclaiming in an injured tone :

" Ramsay, will you never listen to me ? Do you think I'm talking to the air ? Yes, you are going to listen to me now for once."

My early morning is already spoiled, so I put down the book without a word, and as she proceeds to tell me that our daughter simply must be sent off to boarding-school, and asks me several times what work I intend to do this day, I answer as briefly as possible, and, with a sort of self-torture, scrutinise her thin, unattractive features.

Seventeen years ago I married an intelligent, beautiful and, as I then thought, a spiritual woman. She was twenty, with all the freshness and sincerity of youth, her eyes were clear, and her complexion was refreshing to look at. Where is that woman now ? The person I see before me is indefinite and uninspiring. She is stout where she should not be, and thin where she should not be ; she has let herself go ; her clothes hang from her as if they were not hers but she had borrowed them for the occasion. Her hands are large and bony and hard ; her shoes seem too big, and when she walks she does not lift up her feet : and her face is no longer beautiful but looks pinched, her nose is far too acquiline, and when she opens her

mouth it appears to be full of teeth. She is a middle-aged, middle-class woman.

My daughter Alice comes down the stairs, and hardly greeting us, goes to the piano and begins to play. Though she is only sixteen, she despises her mother and me, feels herself oppressed, and I can see that she is longing to get away ; she thinks herself a member of the enlightened generation, and the atmosphere of our house weighs on her like lead. This, for some reason, fills me with anger. I know that it would be far the best thing for her to be sent off to school, as her mother is continually urging, but I invent excuses, declare that we can't afford it, and that she is too young ; this though I know that she sees through me like glass, and that she will despise me more than ever.

I do not love my daughter. Her presence only awakens in me the remembrance that she is not my daughter at all, that this life is not mine either, but that far away, over the Atlantic Ocean, are my true daughters, my true life. What has this awkwardness, this harsh voice, this black hair, to do with me ? My two real daughters in America are different. They have their mother's grace, her voice which is like the note of a viola, her honey-brown hair—the only hair for a woman. They are mine, they are women—this is a stranger.

The breakfast topics are three in number : my daughter's education, the conduct of the new servant, and a third topic selected at random from the morning paper.

While we are eating our oranges my wife asks :

" Well, Alice, I hope you have done all your home work."

" No."

" What do you mean, you haven't ? What do you think we are sending you to an expensive school for ? You'll get kicked out next thing, that's what."

" Oh, stop your nagging, Mother, for goodness sake. You know I can get along, and that's all you care about."

" Don't you dare to speak to your mother like that," I growl furiously, though I know she is quite right, and that, despite her doing no work whatsoever, she is usually the best in her class. In this at least she takes after me, and not her mother.

During the egg course my wife is sure to speak about the new servant. There is always a new servant, for none can

stand my wife for more than a few weeks. I do not assert that I am not difficult as well, but I know for a fact that while they fear my temper, they invariably like and respect me, while they all detest and heartily despise my wife : more than one has told me this in so many words.

" Well, Hilda will never do, that's certain," moans my wife in her grinding, injured tone. " Remember how badly she served last night, and now did you see her hands this morning —why, they are black. It's disgraceful. You can't get a good servant nowadays. And the wages we pay ! "

I note that people slovenly in their personal appearance are apt to be unduly critical of others ; now while my wife spoke, it was evident that she had not yet washed her bony hands, and her finger-nails were none too clean ; one could not imagine being caressed by those hands.

By the time coffee has come, these two entrancing topics have been exhausted, and there is need of an artificial stimulus to the conversation ; almost unconsciously I pick up the *Times* (I should have been scolded had I attempted to look at it before), open to the political page, and make some wholly unnecessary statement, such as :

" I see that Mussolini has arrested the editor of a Milan paper."

" You don't say so," cries my wife, waving her hands about in horror as if it were she who had been placed under arrest. " These wretched Fascisti ! Soon there won't be any liberty left anywhere. How can those Italians allow it ! "

A little later I read :

" Bolsheviks arrest two Britishers."

" Devils," cries my wife furiously, " how dare they ? Those radicals ought to be squashed out ; before we know it they'll be running this country too. Why don't we do something about it. Well, what do you think about it, Alice ? "

My wife's ambition is to bring up Alice as a " lady," in which design she encourages her to form opinions on current matters, and had even suggested her taking extra lessons in elocution.

" I think it's no use discussing it, and that we don't know much about it," says my daughter drily, getting up and

putting down her napkin. How that girl despises her mother and me too!

About nine, after having read the paper sheet by sheet, I start off for my office. My wife stands in the doorway, examining the lock, which does not hold properly, and calling after me:

"You are sure you won't need me in the office to-day, Ramsay? Maybe I'd better come after all. What do you think? Just call me up if I'm needed. I'll be here all morning—I can't go out to do things anyway because of the new maid. I have to teach her everything—she doesn't know how to do a thing. When will you be home? You're sure you don't need me?"

Ever since I was forced to discharge my stenographer to save money, my wife has been doing much of my typing for me. She is not at all stupid at many things, and is skillful on the machine; but I much prefer doing this extra work myself than to hear her grinding, unpleasant voice for these added hours.

At present I am part owner of a newspaper clipping business which I bought from what I was able to save from my last business, which was rubber import. Since my divorce, twenty-four years back, I have owned and been interested in exactly thirteen businesses, not including the present one, of which seven have gone bankrupt, and from the rest of which I have for various reasons retired; and this despite my intelligence, integrity, and business ability. What is the cause?

Mr. Bell, my partner, is already there when I arrive in my office; likewise, a pasty, uninterested chap whom we employ to run errands. I sit down to work, and work on till lunch time, rapidly but without enthusiasm. Formerly when one business failed, I would take up a new with increased zeal, settling out to master its intricacies, and would experience a keen enjoyment as I learned to understand my subject. But now I am worn down by failures, and the old enthusiasm is lacking; I know I cannot succeed, that life is against me. Why then try?

Mr. Bell has led a life of failures too. He is a gentleman and I enjoy his company; but I do not respect him. He is not dishonest, but on the other hand he is not quite honest either;

in the same way, he is not exactly clever, but he is very far from dull. I had him to dinner the other day, and I remarked that when he spilled something he hastily covered it up with his glass. It is difficult to respect a man like that; he is a half-way house.

At one we go out for a quick lunch, return, and work till a quarter to five. It is not easy work. On the floor lie piles of newspapers and reviews of several nationalities; it is our task to scan each one of these publications for articles and news items related no matter how remotely with any of our clients. It is not like ordinary newspaper clipping service, but far more specialised. For instance, one of our clients has us collect all articles bearing on Siamese trade; another asks us to look for mentions of a certain half-forgotten German author. It is impossible for the three of us to do the work thoroughly; yet when we miss something it is apt to cost us a client. Already our trade has slightly fallen off.

I carry home work under my arm to complete before dinner. As usual, I ride thirty-eight minutes in the stuffy Underground, and walk home the crowded, unpleasant way by High Street, in order to save a few moments. But on unlocking my front door I am surprised to hear voices. Visitors! How dare my wife invite guests to my house without consulting me? And who could they be? No decent person would care to come to this house to talk to that rattling, wheezy old vixen. Furiously I sweep into the room. Two middle-class women and a terrified looking little man are sipping tea, while my wife is seated in regal splendour behind the tea kettle.

"Oh," I declare apologetically, turning to go. "Pardon me. I did not know you were seeing any tradespeople to-day, my dear."

"Ramsay!" she cries desperately, getting up quickly. "Ramsay, I should like to introduce you——I——"

Her pale face has become blood red.

"You must really excuse me," I beg her, turning at the door. "I am quite sure you can manage it very well yourself. Call me when dinner is ready."

I go upstairs and set to work. I can hear the guests putting on their cloaks and leaving, and later my wife's sobbing. I work on for a while, but when I can stand it no longer I go

down ; by this time I am heartily ashamed of my childish outburst, and sorry for my wife.

" For God's sake pardon me, Harriet," I say, going up to her. " I am only a miserable, selfish old man. Forgive me." And add in a low voice, " You have much to forgive me for."

She looks up at me, and her face, wrinkled with weeping, looks old and grey and tired.

" Yes, I forgive you, Ramsay. Please go now, I want to be alone."

I sneak upstairs and sit down by the bay window. I remember the girl I married seventeen years ago. I thought then that I would form her, that I would mould her character into something worth while. She loved me ; I would learn to love her ——and to forget. And what has happened ? What has become of her—and of her love ? And after seventeen years had I learned to forget ? I am seized with despair. I sink my grey head in my hand, and rock back and forth moaning.

" It is no use," I think. " My God ! What is the use ? What is the use ? " . . . . . .

Sometimes when I am unduly depressed, I tell myself that there is no brightness left in my life ; but this is not so. No matter how burdened with misery the human mind may be, it never needs more than a trifle to bring a momentary forgetfulness ; soldiers under shellfire can enjoy their cigarettes, and in the same way there is more than one pleasure left me. I enjoy good food, intelligent conversation, and the theatre, though these are all rare enough nowadays. I can still look forward to my long evenings with my books : and there is another enjoyment greater than these.

Ever since my divorce I have received a letter each month from my eldest daughter Margaret in New York. She has been living with her mother and sister, and the beginning of each month I send them a sum of money, as large as I can afford at the time. My fortunes have varied, and theirs have fluctuated correspondingly. During one time, at the beginning of my second marriage, I was doing fairly well as part owner of a large glass blowing industry, and my first family lived in style in an expensive New York apartment. My house outside London I had rented only temporarily, and I planned to give it up and buy a larger one when the lease expired; before that,

however, I quarrelled with my partners, retired from the business, and used up my earnings to buy an interest in a folding chair factory, for which I predicted great things, but which soon failed owing to the dishonesty of my friend and partner. Then my two families were forced to live more simply, but a little later I made money again, this time in insurance, and would have made more had it not been for the war. And so on. My business life, like my private one, is without order or reason. I have grown to hate good luck as much as bad, for if fate lets me off now, I know it will only give me a harder blow later : and I no longer care a great deal.

At present I can give my first family little, and though I agreed with my second wife when we married always to send them as much as we used ourselves, she looks at me as if I were robbing her when I go to the post office at the beginning of the month. Now they have taken a little house in one of the cheaper suburbs of New York. They apparently live on nothing, but even so, both my daughters have been forced to take work, the elder as private secretary, the younger as accountant in a large concern. This hurts me, and I feel that they must despise me for not having earned enough to support my own daughters in my old age.

Margaret, my favourite, I have not seen for almost ten years, since my last visit to the States ; now she is a grown woman of thirty-two, much like her mother according to the snapshot she sent me, but she is not yet married. Lucia, the younger, visited me four years ago when she was, I believe, twenty-three or twenty-four. We quarrelled, and as a result of this quarrel I have neither written nor heard from her since that time. Though I still maintain that the cause of the quarrel was entirely her fault, though I declare I will never see her again, I should really give a great deal for some pretext for a reconciliation. And she knows this. I often ask myself how a warm young girl can so harden her heart against a lonely old man that she refuses to swallow her pride and beg his forgiveness.

I am continually writing Margaret to come and stay with me for a while. The guest-room stands empty, there is a servant doing nothing—why, then, should my own daughter sit in a stuffy office typing for eight hours a day ? Why should

my false daughter enjoy my house alone? And one day at last I am delighted to receive a letter saying that she has given up her job and that, provided I still want her, she will come to London to visit me. If I still want her! I hasten to the post office to cable her the necessary money at once; it is the first time in years that I have had something to look forward to.

I am at the station to meet her when she arrives. She looks pale and tired from the journey, and at once I am overcome with tenderness. I want to take her in my arms, to tell her that I love her, that I am glad to see her; but I do none of these things. I can only look at her, my lips trembling, and think,

"How like her mother she is! My God, how like her!"

We go to claim her baggage; she is carrying a wretched little brown suitcase which I do not even attempt to take from her. She finds one piece at once, a large cheap carry-all, much the worse for wear, torn at one edge.

"Well, that's fine," she says.

"But we must find the rest."

"There isn't any rest, Father."

"Oh, I see," I say vacantly.

In the taxi I keep looking at her face hungrily till she turns away in confusion; in the light of the feeble arc lamps I try to read into this face the features, the expression of that other dear face I shall never see again.

"You left your mother well—and happy?"

"Yes, Father."

"She said nothing—she sent no message?" I ask guiltily, and then, without giving her time to answer, "No, no, no, no—of course. Well, I hope you will be happy with us here," but in a moment I cannot keep myself from asking again,

"Did your mother say anything when you left—have you any message from her?"

My wife is downstairs when we arrive. Of course, she has never liked either of my elder daughters, but knowing that I love Margaret, she is bitterest towards her.

"You oughtn't to take taxis, Ramsay," she grinds out as we enter, "you know very well that we can't afford it," then in the same tone, "Oh, hello, Margaret—it's a long time since we met." My daughter shrinks as she is kissed hastily on the

mouth ; but then my wife begins, as usual, tinkering with the damaged door lock.

I show my daughter to her room, but instead of leaving her, walk up and down excitedly, casting glances at her face ; when she turns away reddening, I still try to catch glimpses of it in the mirror.

She begins unpacking, and among other objects places a small framed photograph of her mother on the mantel. Assuming a casual manner, I stroll over and look at it.

" She's grown older," I say, trying to detach my voice from my body, " but she's still beautiful. It's a long time—she was younger then. Yes." I know that it embarrasses my daughter, but I can talk about nothing else ; it is so long since I was able to speak.

Despite my wife, dinner seems almost gay to-night. Instead of discussing the new building that is going up in the vicinity, the foggy condition of the weather, my daughter's classes, the conversation is very nearly general ; my daughter tells us all about the crossing, and appears delighted at the difference in English and American trains and taxicabs ; I even warm up sufficiently to tell one of my old jokes, which I know that my wife and Alice have already heard a dozen times or more.

During dessert I declare jovially to my wife :

" We will have to take Margaret about and get her some new clothes, won't we, dear ? "

" Goodness," cries my wife, turning her cold eyes on me, " has someone left you an inheritance ? " Such an answer somehow dampens one's zest.

While sipping coffee after dinner, the cat slinks into the room. I have not yet spoken about this cat ; it has a history of its own. It was a fine Angora when my wife bought it for me, and incidentally for herself, at Christmas some years ago. Then it was a sleek and contented animal, with a disposition so happy that it won it the name of " Jolly " ; but with the years its sleekness and joy have fallen away ; it has become emaciated, mangy, and melancholy. Nowadays Jolly wanders furtively about as if each of its seven cat lives were in momentary danger, its tail droops, and it has worms. The atmosphere of the house has affected the animal, as it seems to have the pots of faded geraniums in the window, and even

the crinkled tomatoes that grow in the backyard. One of Poe's characters is obsessed with hatred of a cat, and I imagine it is very much the same feeling that I experience : I hate it as a fellow sufferer.

But when this cat sees my daughter Margaret, it bounds towards her, purring with delight, and jumps on her lap ; it has not shown so much spirit in years. However, my wife soon puts an end to its unaccustomed outburst by confining it to the cellar ; and in the same way my own high spirits soon peter out and, without even desiring to read as usual, I follow my wife to bed.

But that does not necessarily mean sleep. If my daughter in the guest-room next door were awake, she might hear my wife's grinding, injured voice going on and on and on without a halt. Why, she would like to know, do I stare at that girl as I do ? Is she as beautiful as all that ? Maybe I have fallen in love with her ? Well, she realises she is only my wife, and maybe I think she hasn't the right to ask such questions ? I needn't believe that she fancies I still love her—how could she even expect such a thing of me—but why do I keep throwing the fact in her very face ? What is that girl doing here anyway ? Do I think she doesn't realise why I want her here ? Why shouldn't she stay in America where she belongs ? What has she to do with our home ? Perhaps I have so much money I had to find someone to spend it on ? Maybe I felt that my family was living too luxuriously ? And maybe I supposed that cynical woman would be a good influence for my own innocent little daughter ? She could tell things about her, even if I couldn't—have I ever known her to be mistaken in sizing up a face ? I've already succeeded in ruining her life—am I planning to ruin her daughter's next ? She was a sweet young girl herself once before she met me—don't I suppose she is in a position to tell an evil influence when she sees one ?

Towards one she falls into an exhausted sleep. When I hear the regular snores, I crawl noiselessly out of bed, tiptoe over to the door, profiting from past experience, make my way down the stairs without creaking a board. Downstairs I turn on the light, and, taking out a volume of Proust, begin to read. I read on till dawn, trying to forget my life in the printed words.

My wife's reactions to her step-daughter's presence are

worthy the attentions of a psycho-analyst. At first her attitude is reserved, dignified, matronish; she wishes to impress the fact that she is a family woman, a person of weight in the social community, a breeder of England's next generation. She contrasts herself to my daughter: the unmarried woman, the useless mouth, the unwanted. Her tone bespeaks the mother; she is condescending, gives orders, uses neither powder nor perfume. One would never guess there is only a few years' difference between the two women.

A little later there is a sudden change. Instead of trying to appear elderly, she attempts to take off a few years, begins to powder to excess, for some reason has her hair bobbed. She is jealous of my daughter, and vexed when she finds her in my company, and she tries rather absurdly to flirt with me, in order, I suppose, to gain back my attentions.

While I am reading she comes and sits down heavily on my lap, taking away my book.

"Good heavens," I cry in mock dismay, "consider my age. I'm sixty-four. What do you think I'm made of? Do you want to kill me?"

"Ramsay, dear, why aren't you ever nice and sweet to me any more? Have I grown so ugly?"

"Are you being pathetic, my dear? I am afraid this is hardly a suitable place to exercise your talents for the theatre. Excuse me."

"Ramsay, darling!"

"Come, come, my dear, I can hardly satisfy you any more. You must look for someone else—choose a younger man."

"I know what it is," she snaps with sudden spitefulness, her face hardening, "you're in love with that girl. That's what."

In love—in love. Yes, I have always been in love, desperately, hopelessly in love. And now, twenty-four years since I laid eyes on my loved one, I am deeper in love than I have ever been before. My love is undying—it will never end.

I seek excuses to enter my daughter's room that I may see the picture of my beloved. As she is reading, I let my hand steal carelessly over the girl's honey-brown hair, but she knows that it is not she I am caressing.

At the motion pictures one night one of the actresses is

strangely like my beloved—her gestures, her eyes, her hands ; I am seized with such a trembling that the whole bench shakes and the people look about at me ; I cannot control myself, and am forced to leave the theatre, mumbling some feeble excuse to my wife, and walk up and down the pavement outside till the show is over.

In love, always in love——

For some time I have known that my wife has been intercepting Margaret's letters from her mother, and my daughter has several times complained to me about it. I assume an air of wounded dignity, of ruffled pride, and assure her that it is an unheard-of event, that she can rest assured it will never happen again. But in my heart I know I will never have the courage to mention the matter ; I have far too much regard for my poor night's rest. Long ago I learned better than to voluntarily bring up the subject for an all-night harangue.

And this is not the only insult to which my daughter is subject. My wife does not fail to remind her of the social harmfulness of the idle, or to suggest that everybody should seek work of some kind in order to take the burden off the few. Almost nightly the dinner table witnesses a fresh attack.

" Just fancy," cries my wife happily, " I was looking down the street this evening and I saw someone striding along, taking up the whole pavement ; straight as a stick, mind you, and with her head back as if she were looking for aeroplanes. Goodness, who can that fine lady be, I thought ; and when she got closer—well, who do you suppose it was ? "

My wife ogles us about the table, her long white teeth protruding from all corners of her smiling mouth.

" Why, no other than our own little Margie," she cries, laughing shrilly and patting my daughter's arm with her clammy, grey hand. " What were you looking for, Margie—won't you tell us ? "

And I sit there, smiling like an imbecile, and afraid to open my mouth, though I know the poor girl winces under these continual petty insults. Later I hear Alice weeping in my daughter Margaret's room and the voice of the older girl trying to console her, and I know it is out of shame for her mother and for me that she weeps. That is not pleasant for a father.

One night, shortly before midnight, I sit reading as usual

when I hear cautious footsteps on the stairs. My daughter Margaret comes into the sitting-room; she is dressed in a travelling costume and in her hand she holds her little brown bag. My heart gives a sudden squeeze: I feel this is the end.

She puts down her bag noiselessly and tiptoes up to the blue plush armchair.

"Well, Father, I'm going," she says in a low voice. "You will have to say good-bye to your wife for me—I couldn't do it. Send my black bag on when you get a chance—I'll write you my address."

I can only stare at her dully, without even putting down my book, and think, "How like her mother—my God, how like her."

"You're going?" I finally manage to say.

"Yes, I'm going. I don't know where—I shall get a job somehow. Later I'll be going home."

Silence again.

"I'm an old man, Margaret. I shall be gone soon; you won't blame me any more then."

"I don't blame you any more," she replies coldly, "none of us blame you any more—not for anything. We've gotten over that."

I feel my old temper rising in me again.

"How dare you stand there and speak to me like that, girl?" I cry. "How dare you throw your mother's blame back in my face? How dare you?"

"Speak lower or your wife will wake up," she interrupts disdainfully.

"Let me speak," I shout furiously. "So you don't blame me any more for anything? How dare you say that? Let your mother first accuse me of a single act of disloyalty, and then we will talk of blaming. Let her say that I ceased loving her for a single moment, and I will let you speak of blaming or of not blaming. Give me one sensible reason why she left me, and I will be the first to censure myself!"

"Why such a scene at this late date?" asks my daughter calmly. "And why should I now begin to explain what your whole wasted life has failed to teach you? Do you ask your daughter to tell you that you are a weak, selfish, foolish old

man, whom it is impossible for anyone to live with ? If you could for once learn to bow your neck ! "

But my anger has soon burned itself out ; it is unseemly for a dead man to be aroused. And I cast furtive glances up the stairs, hoping that my wife has not been awakened. My daughter goes to the door and takes up her little brown bag.

" You will need money ? " I suggest.

" No, thanks. I have a few pounds."

" But I will get your passage home—let me send it to your address."

" No, thank you—I shall manage."

There is nothing more to say : she is about to leave.

" Well, let me help you part of the way with your bag at least. You will let me do that for you," I say desperately.

" Oh, it's so light—don't trouble. Thank you."

She is gone. And as I close the door on her dear figure, my own grey life seems to come flooding in the room like a mist. I go back to my chair by the bay window, and gaze out on the arc-lit street down which she has disappeared. The grandfather clock in the hallway slowly ticks the hours. I try to analyse my thoughts, but now, try as I will, I can think of nothing significant : it only strikes me that the corner of the carpet is worn away, that the lamp-shade has faded from green to grey. The psycho-analysts say that only the desires are important. But what do I desire ? My wishes are as trivial as my thoughts. I desire that for my few remaining years I shall be allowed my own bedroom, at least not forced to share my room with one who is uncongenial to me. And another desire : I should like to see the woman I love once more before I die. That is all : it is modest enough. And my thoughts return once more to the worn carpet, to the faded silk shade. The clock ticks, the hours pass ; lonely as the grave.

In this houseful of people, in this city full of people, I am all alone : my days are peopled with spectres, and a spectre myself, it is my lot to move amongst them clinging to the sole reality of my memories. The last clod of earth has been flung upon my grave.

Poems

By ALEC BROWN.

Ballad for a Broken-hearted Victorian

Oh, lost chaste maid in indecorous time!
And quavering voice a recollection keep:
Fast by maternal knee flushed cheek, sublime
The primal premonition buried deep.
And where and when they silently did weep
On slow emergence from a maiden mind;
Tossed, turn about; gay sound of bells in sleep:
'Tis gone, strewn streets to-day, shrunk orange-rind.

Did I suspect the morning white with rime,
Holly in the chancel gathered deep?
Aye, old voice quavers disconnected time:
Slow through the snow, the small bell calling, keep
Low muffled hands; and summer evenings, sweep
The proud pedestrians; no, never mind;
And timeless carriages sedately creep:
'Tis gone, strewn streets to-day, shrunk orange-rind.

With what faint full-veiled hastiness see climb
Bright herald sun, and slumber grow less deep;
Turn—turn about; invade and wane that chime,
Parental eyes in breakfast queries leap,
Yet smooth unquivering lashes secret keep;
Uncertain-voiced I seek it through my mind
And quavering recoverless syllables creep:
'Tis gone, strewn streets to-day, shrunk orange-rind.

Spurned fool believed the consented vow to keep
The peaceful world unchanging laws confined
Till crumbling hour the quavering voice must weep:
'Tis gone, strewn streets to-day, shrunk orange-rind.

Ballad of Harvest and the Reaping Machine.

I yellowed corn behold with cloudy eyes
  Stir in endless waves across the field,
By driving wind that nowhere-nowhere flies
  The striding waves monotonously yield ;
And ominously memory revealed
  A former harvest's visionary gold,
Nor rapid sequel comfortly concealed—
  The muddy stubble, clumsy clods unrolled.

Then, executioner, at dawn I rise,
  Allay my fears with figures of the yield,
So wait, while lark, or partridge, frightened flies,
  And watch the reaper, newly oiled and steeled,
With harvesters, come clattering to the field ;
  They to turn all, ere mists the scene unfold,
Their heedless satisfaction unconcealed,
  To muddy stubble, clumsy clods unrolled.

The steady whir of eager knives hear rise,
  And see at intervals the framework yield,
Out-tossed a twine-tied sheaf inertly flies,
  The men that follow range them through the field ;
At dusk the last small lingering hare revealed
  Skips wildly from the final strip of gold,
Halloed, bewildered, shot at, unconcealed
  By muddy stubble, clumsy clods unrolled.

At the end, with wild laugh leading from the field
  The ageing harvesters unwitting hold
The final waggon's course by next year's weald
  Of muddy stubble, clumsy clods unrolled.

Autumn Ploughing.

Across the ridge the ploughers creep,
I hear the calling rooks alone
Re-echoing across the deeper
Hollow of the stackyard droning.

Beyond the outline headland sway
Farm and buildings trimly crouched
And dwindle in October haze
Behind the slow approaching plough.

Swoop to furrow rooks, and poise ;
The wild relaying caws dissolve
Dispended in the wane and swell
Of throbbing air as they revolve.

I see black wings extended quiver
Suddenly in silence laid,
And head and yellow thrusting beak
Repeating dig the new-turned clay ;
And last year's ploughing clearly rises
Undivided as I stare :
The nearing harness up the grey
Idle smoke-descending air
Jangling rhythmic up the ridge
Across the looming afternoon.

The horses' tossing heads break clear,
The clanking to the stackyard drone.

I shiver waiting at the hedge :
With halted tread beneath the reins
The Punches heave the plough aside,
And the cold bright share subsides again.

Again, again toward the trees
To cultivate the heavy soil
They disappear across the ridge
Inaudible in distant toil.

Serenade of the Fall of the Year.

(E. C. B.)

Below your window idly late I sit
  Upon the yellow leaf-bespattered ground,
With numb legs dangling in a new-dug pit,
  And hold the night-damp air with lingering sound.

The orchard lamps are gone, the final swathe
  Pegged by the thatcher neatly in the stack,
And I, voice serenading from the grave,
  Have seen the Summer herds come wintering back.

The bandstand is dismantled and the wind
  Tumbles leaves and paper on the grass,
And I can hear in gusts brought by the wind
  The lessened traffic early homeward pass.

The rains set in have chilled me to the bone,
  Drizzling clear between the naked trees
On brown leaves, rotting. Pity me, alone,
  Soliciting slight last amenities:

Ere you too come by this bewildering bed,
  Dug six full feet before my faltering gaze,
I half aware that all the things were said
  When this set dulled desire into a blaze.
I on the clayey edge, down shoulders bent,
  With clayey hands support on either side,
And tiring eyes most fervently intent
  On echoing walls that high your beauty hide.
Appear, appear, loved one, again, to spin
  Doubt to a hope, and hope to dissipate
The crumbling agues slowly creeping in;
  I, serenader, omen-stirred of late,

Tremble, from a horror creeping too,
  Those lips be also turned to trodden clay,
Those limbs' delights time ever made too few,
  All harvested, all ended yesterday.

The wine is pressed, the winter wood is sawn,
  The stubble-fields stretch emptily around,
And, clinging here, on grimy hands updrawn,
  I serenade the air with lingering sound.

Scrutinies

(6) Ancients and Moderns

By BERTRAM HIGGINS.

"GOOD Lord, what a stink! You look like a necromancer of the best period."

"'This rough magic I here abjure . . .'"

"The vindictiveness of failure?"

"The energy of doubt. You have come at the right moment, my Purveyor of Historical Comforts! The flames are satiated with these rich limited-editions I have flung them. Perhaps your flesh, that dainty illuminated parchment, would sharpen their appetite."

"I see you are in a very bad humour. However, while there's still time I will rescue this charred octavo from its martyrdom."

"Its body is only half grilled, but it has already been rapt into the heaven of popular esteem, like the under-done St. Catherine snatched from her grid-iron."

"And yet how perfectly Strachey expresses, in his delicately ironic style, the disillusionment of the age!"

"Perfectly, indeed! Your modern cynic is a Quixote who sets out to slay monsters of superstition, and succeeds in basting a Nightingale or disembowelling a Queen Victoria. Antinopomancy without omens."

"In any case your fire burns more brightly without him. You could offer it another victim now."

"*Keats and Shakespeare* . . . a soggy volume which might damp a more ardent flame; but it will, at least, invite the torment—for its subjects. No other critic gets quite so much satisfaction from the agonies of the poets, though the ghoul is a common enough figure in contemporary literature."

"And surely the poets justify him. 'The sweetest songs are those . . .'"

"The poem is always a triumph over the very thing which the ghoulish critic considers its revelation."

"But the moderns have had a new revelation of pain."

"The ancients knew the same things, and, realising that suffering had to be accepted, they could deplore it with all the energy of the impulse to joy which it frustrated. The modern refuses the meaning of suffering, though he is fascinated by its facts. These he adores—Zola his sticks and stones, Galsworthy his tribal misfits—under the name of "Reality." There are exceptions, of course, even among the Edwardians. Conrad's later work got muddled in a too-Western acquired technique, which brought him to dilettantism, otherwise he might have nationalised a sense of Destiny which the English novel has discarded for moral realism and English poetry for stunts of the sensibility."

"I find myself very impressed by the fearlessness and emancipation displayed in contemporary poetry. That pile of small, bright volumes on your left is, I suppose, destined to follow you into your retirement—the pure gold remaining when what you are pleased to consider dross has been burnt away."

"Who would survive this test of fire?"

"Well, there are 197 contributors to the *Bookman Treasury of Living Poets* (by no means exhausting the list), which is as remarkable for its contrasts as for its community of aims. Won't you admit this fact as evidence that a thoroughly vital artistic activity is going on?"

"The production of verse is not a thing which in itself fills me with much enthusiasm, and the cant that is handed out about the closeness of modern poetry to modern life shows, if no desire to deceive, a complete ignorance of the meaning of either term. Chuck them in."

"Literature does not admit of these phœnix births from the ashes of universal destruction. It is a matter of compromise, adjustments and approximations, and you must learn to appreciate the intention where the achievement is only partial."

"Intentions cannot be known, legitimately. Biographical-psychological criticism has done rather more to confuse than to clarify the real issues."

"The real issues?"

"Yes, the reason why this word-thing, which you look

upon as material for entertainment or comparative study, can pounce on me and direct my life."

"You seem to be a little hysterical. I doubt if your attitude allows the possibility of any real criticism."

"You are the hospitable or feminine type of reader. You wish to be pleased, to supplement your not very intense existence with whatever phantasy ogles you from a printed page. For me, most books are tiresome acquaintances, 'simple and faithless as a smile or shake of the hand,' whose ineffective efforts to attach me to them will meet with no second opportunity."

"May I ask how you choose your companions, then?"

"I do not choose them. They assert themselves and win against my hostility and suspicion. Their presence deprives me of contentment, fills me with the incomparable discomforts of a life-change."

"I believe that you are rather apt to accept things for their avoidance of what you dislike. Can you, for instance, find room for Swinburne s buoyant sea-praises, together with Hardy's pitying judgment in the verses on the sinking of the 'Titanic'?"

"You have hinted at the most prevalent weakness of the modern attitude—one which allows me to abandon quite a number of interesting writers to your respect. This attitude depends on the reader's being aware of the demoded values from which the new work expresses a reaction; which is enough to prove that such work is never likely to have the autonomous status of literature. Eliot's satiric squibs, Huxley's metrical shockers, not to mention the mass of imitations on both sides of the Atlantic—that is, the main body of 'advanced' poetry—spring straight from this equivocal motive."

"I disagree with these prepossessions of yours. If we are going to continue this discussion, you will have to come down to an impersonal quality, such as technique."

"A man who can talk about the impersonality of technique would do better to declare that all literature speaks straight to his heart without any such intermediaries. It is clear that you react only to subject-matter. Don't be ashamed; it shows you live in, at any rate, two dimensions."

"You maudlin æsthetic prig! I believed from your obsession with literature you had experienced raptures which, in time, you might have allowed me to share. I know now that your promised land is as bleak as your manners, a tin-and-linoleum paradise for cranks and perverts."

"I've no doubt you're happier in the hands of the 197 masseurs of your cheap-and-ready spa."

"But if you refuse any consolation from those who are, after all, the most efficient practitioners of literature, where are you going to get what you want, or how do you know what it is, or if it exists?"

"I don't see any purpose in meeting you on such fundamental ground as that—not yet, at all events. What you desire in art is utterly different from what I seek. Your findings are disagreeable to me, mine almost incomprehensible to you, but it is only on that level that we can communicate at all."

"You mean, on the level of particularities? In that case what's the use of æsthetics? If you are suggesting that I'm incapable of justifying my tastes by the accepted principles of art, you are quite mistaken. It will not take me five minutes to outline, in the most definite terms, a complete system——"

"Pray don't. If you must be ambitious and attempt a general question, let us get back to your 'impersonal' matter of technique. By calling technique impersonal, you shift the burden of personality elsewhere—and where else, if not on the content? So that the value of a work of art lies in its message, a conclusion not unfamiliar to several mid-Victorians."

"Wait a minute! I think I have you at last. You have involuntarily identified the value of art with personality."

"Not at all involuntarily. The art of poetry consists in the relationship between two things, personality and words. Criticism naturally settles on personality, for the same reason that the musical critic will give the structure of a symphony, deducing from this the composer's conception, without attempting to describe its motion in sound. However, when you read in the *Times Literary Supplement* that Mr. Z.'s verses on the Cenotaph are instinct with nobility and dignified

regret, you may assume that Mr. Z.'s specialised adventure with words is being entirely overlooked, that the reviewer is appraising him solely as a sympathetic member of society. On the other hand, when the *Criterion* welcomes the new forms and important rhythms of Miss U.S.A.'s work, without any reference to its grammatic content, we are just as much in the dark about its poetic quality: words are being treated as organisms, and the personality of the poet as a mechanical factor in their arrangement, whose relation to the thing ceases with its completion, like the hands that solve a picture-puzzle."

"You seem to lay an unusual stress on personality. If you consider the poem to be a faithful reflection of it, how do you account for a poet like Marvell, a unique poet, but—in the best sense of the word, certainly—an ordinary man?"

"That difficulty is probably due to the change in our contemporary idea of the psychological norm. We have every reason to believe that Marvell was not thought an ordinary man in his own time; and, in ours, psycho-analysis is unfit to classify him until it evolves a more positive theory of imaginative processes. As to personality and the poem, of course there is no faithful reflection; that metaphor exacts two bounded substances. It can be more truly envisaged as a struggle for mastery between living forms of different potentialities. The poet advances his innermost energy against the energy of the language—not his practical will, for that is too simplified an instrument to have much effect on the swarming microscopic life of words. His purpose is, let us assume, to objectify in words the pre-verbal images which lie at the root of his socialised mental activities. Freud calls these images archaic, and says that they hark back to the original forms of the race. If that is so, it affords some explanation of the impersonal element which people affect to see in works of art; by which they mean no more than Schopenhauer when he says that æsthetic apprehension, by liberating the mind from the Will, gives it up wholly to those eternal Ideas in which it participates as a creature of the phenomenal world. This impersonal monistic element in poetry may seem to run counter to the differentiating function of technique; but it is better not to turn too quickly to the

metaphysics of such questions. Man's first acquirements in speech were demonstrative, limited to statement; when he found the sensuous nature of things to be but imperfectly indicated in the form of statements, poetry was born. Then the modes of the poetic approach (the epic, lyric, etc.) were designed to fit the main directions of universal community—sentiment and metres were abstracted from the rhythms of local dance-festivals. This is mere speculation as history, a metaphor upon a metaphorical phenomenon. What is less uncertain is that the physique of poetry was established very early; that discovery, in the strictest sense, was over soon after it began; and that the unslackened energy of the poet towards new forms has since been applied to the unending re-arrangement and combining of the parts into which the original structures can be dissolved. A pure materialist might use this argument as groundwork for a pessimistic doctrine, but as its plausibility would depend on a quantitative estimate of artistic values, his system, like most philosophical systems, would owe its clarity to the shallowness of the perception from which it started. If you examine the tendencies of modern poetry on its formal side——"

"You are constantly over-rating the importance of new forms. The true poet is nearly always content to express himself through the current forms, and if for some reason they become unsuitable to his idiom, the change he makes in them is quite incidental to the quality of his work: one might almost say, a mere convenience, though I don't deny that such reformations come regularly in the history of literature."

"It is not an æsthetic necessity but a psychological need. You seem to have no conception of the extent to which poetry has become estranged from the springs of contemporary sensibility. The last formal revolution, which Wordsworth's powerful but one-sided genius succeeded in carrying through only by the destruction of many valuable traditions, came after a period which, with all its shortcomings, did maintain the connection between poetry and life in its topical aspects. Wordsworth uprooted the effeminate fancy of the eighteenth century, but he also dammed up its legitimate channels of satire. The neo-Romantics of the Victorian period made no attempt to liberate these channels; and they perverted

the major conventions of the Lake Poets to such a degree, and so rapidly, that to-day we find healthier stimulation in the most anathematised of the neo-Augustans—in the *Loves of the Plants* than in the *Idylls of the King*. Nowadays an English poet refreshes half his faculties from the French stream, where Hugo's bifurcation from Boileau, like Boileau's from Racine, did not result in a drying-up of those sources. In Baudelaire, particularly, the saturnine poetic faculty is as indistinguishable from the expansive as it is in Shakespeare, Webster, Ford or Donne. That blended strain is heard often in Milton, rarely—finally, perhaps—in Pope: Swift's verse is a satiric display of unrivalled purity, and no one is further removed than he from the duplex Elizabethan. With such a heritage as this and the ascendant line clearly marked, the modern poet may not appear to be unusually handicapped in his effort towards a new construction. Fresh forms, you said, are incidental to the æsthetic scheme of poetry; so they are, in the sense that the pressure which creates them comes from without, requiring them as improved mediating devices between the poet and his audience. But in our time"—

"Really, I can't understand this insistence on the ephemeral movement of life as an important thing for art. Surely its greatest boon has always been the refuge it offers to the sensitive and thoughtful man from these very circumstances —how does it go?—

> The—something—and the weary weight
> Of all this unintelligible world.

Not an escape—oh, no; rather the true Reality in which the soul is purified of all the fret and illusion of its everyday round in the arena of appearances."

"The poet is not a Yogi. He can't afford to despise his world of appearances; witness Doughty's failure as a poet. Indeed, appearances are the first condition of his art. Wordsworth's renewal of poetry was prompted by his perception of vast neglected layers of subject—matter capable of poetic treatment. These he called 'Nature,' which was not so much an exclusive term of description as one of the forms of apostrophe by which men of original vision hail the field-of-force from which they derive their energy. The massiveness

of his achievement was due to his imperturbable self-justification of this impulse—a state of knowledge which accentuated his unenviable qualities to the distress even of Crabb Robinson, and which inflamed Keats, who had a different æsthetic, to mockery. To-day nearly all our choicest, our most 'emancipated' works of literature can be rightly enjoyed only as progressive exercises towards a suitable æsthetic—as manifestations, using art-forms with parable motives, of a process, of intellectual elimination. Judged by any fuller standard they would be said to die in original sin, for the original sin of the artist is any qualification of belief (which invariably reflects itself in the technique) in his own imaginative life. I say intellectual, because, in my opinion, the problem of resolving life into poetry at this stage of their alienation will be solved—as it can only be realised—by a highly self-conscious talent. I do not mean, however, that the intellect can possibly succeed in doing this in separation from the poetic activity."

"That afterthought of yours, I suppose, is designed to circumvent any further embarrassing enquiries into your dogmas on this subject?"

"I am dogmatic to fools: it is a feudal right which the law that protects your body cannot deprive me of. The technical forms which the fulfilled poet will stamp on the face of our age are, of course, unpredictable; the incomplete writers I referred to at any rate move more surely in their parables of elimination than the critic, whose method cannot follow them in their passage from one stage to another, until that stage has been reached. But the other factor in the dualism of poetry, the psychological formation, is more plainly deducible from the past, for we have the witness of the present that it belongs to a tradition of which poetry is only one aspect. The disintegrating movements of modern thought turn the poet towards objective expression, the natural direction of the individual mind when its autonomy is discredited. But in our time the scientist's pretence to supersede the poet in this field is so popular that the poet, confounded in his relationship with his audience, is forced to modify his objectifying tendency. However, he may be affected by the first of these conditions—the most significant writers are

profoundly affected—the poet is less likely to make any compromise with the second; on the other hand, he cannot ignore the corruption of his audience. This lyric-dramatic conflict is apparent in every estimable poem of the day, most aggravatedly, perhaps (at times it almost gets to the point of parallel statements) in *The Waste Land*. That poem does not realise any important advance towards a suitable form, but it is very suggestive in its indications of the new convention in style, which will link up with the blended strain I have already traced for you in certain poets of the past. It will be a style beaten out of unusually complex elements into an equilibrium between the two forces of expression, the expansive and the saturnine——"

"Excuse me, but I'm afraid I shall have to be going now. But before I leave I want to give you an idea of my own literary standards, which——"

"I know them. Another result of the sandwiched condition of the modern poet——"

"One moment. Allow me to——"

"What the devil! If I wanted to hear you speak I should visit you. Don't you know the laws of hospitality?"

"Now, don't let us quarrel over a small matter like this. You are a curious chap, but I have always had a sort of esteem for you. Indeed, if you only knew it, I stand up for you loyally whenever my friends become irritated with your eccentric manners. If they say that you're not really cultured, that you have often shown your indifference to many beautiful things relished by the rest of us, I point out to them that you are a young writer and that your ambition to make a personal addition to our delights more than makes up for your sometimes whimsical and unbalanced attitude to the work of your elders. Or, if they accuse you of being conceited I explain to them that the psychology of the poet meditating a poem has a great deal in common with that of the woman who is about to become a mother, and that similar allowances should be made for impulsive and even outrageous behaviour. I don't think you quite appreciate my point of view in the questions we have been discussing; let me try and make clear to you how much literature means to me. It is true I don't write myself, but I am sure you would not consider

that keenest disappointment of my life any bar to my insight into literary matters. Why, there is nothing that gives me so much and so exalted pleasure, nothing I—I won't say think about, for to my mind the experiences of art are of so transcendant and delicate a nature that it is wiser, on the whole, to accept them with an open spirit—but I am sure there is nothing I talk about so much and (to be frank) so well. I do not wish to flaunt the advantages of my classical education, but you are aware that I am pretty proficient also in modern languages; and you once confided to me that you found it impossible to fully—I mean, fully to—appreciate any poetry in another tongue, even French. If I may say so, this range I possess gives me certain advantages in my estimate of books; but I won't stress that point. What I want to convince you of is the variety of my taste as a reader of contemporary work. You, I think, are, perhaps, a trifle narrow in the way you judge it; you are apt to take sides too violently, ruling out one thing in favour of another, and continually lessening the satisfaction you get from that residue by seeking to surpass it elsewhere, instead of cherishing it inalienably amidst other attachments, if only for the memory of what it once meant to you. Have you no sympathy with a more gracious attitude?"

"A gracious attitude! You look to literature for emotional solace, and that revolts me morally; you actually find it there, which revolts me æsthetically. You make writers the scavengers of your shallow appetites, priding yourself that the gratification is on a cultural level. When your nature shrinks from the sight of its own apathy, you go to Lawrence to claim your share in the involuntary supremacy of the phallus. Forster finds you muddled; you go away complacent, with a filched sense of values. Overfeeding on Walpoles and May Sinclairs, you can turn to Wyndham Lewis for an intellectual emetic. I have even known you, after heaven knows what orgies, recuperate among the Marsh Poets; and when I reproached you for the pusillanimity of your reaction, Eliot's disciplinary regimen or Edith Sitwell's fresh effusion of images restored your vitality free (for you borrowed their books). Joyce must be a rather uncongenial source of comfort; he would take too much out of you and

put in what you hadn't bargained for; but he is a useful stop-gap for conversation: you can talk plaintively of the dangerous influence of psycho-analysis on the spontaneity of the artist, while your secret thought runs, 'The modern writer is getting so self-concentrated that soon he will be dispensing altogether with the good old compromise—plot, and so on—for the entertainment of the reader. What on earth will become of me, then?' Whenever I place you in fancy, it is at a circulating library—in one of those menageries where your pets lie safely chained; where the lion is trussed up with the lamb and the phœnix with the turtle. Only an occasional glare from the shelves interrupts your tour of inspection, or the smothered snarl of integrity hidden behind a series of Arnold Bennett's latest. Is it possible that you are a type of the general public? And if you are, who are the fools who talk about the basis of art being communication? It is the æsthetic of a slave in the interests of muddy hedonists.

"But this motion, I see, is wasted on you. Your thoughts are queasy, brooding on the ashes of your sentimental friends. What exquisite anguish my little bonfire must have caused you! Good-bye! Next time you come I shall be tempted to purchase the whole lot again and re-enact the infernal scene with a lighter heart."

The New Roman Empire.

By WYNDHAM LEWIS.

The sort of question that is asked daily in the Press of every Western country which does not possess a dictator to-day is: "Are we about to possess a dictator? If so, what sort of a dictator are we about to possess? Will he be a very hard one, or a fairly accommodating one? Are we the sort of people who deserve or are cut out for a dictator? Would a dictator have a good time with us; should we have a good time with a dictator? If we are not about to possess a dictator, how are we going to manage to govern ourselves or become solvent?"

In countries that possess dictators the press (of the dictator) is so pleased at having an excellent dictator, or any sort of dictator at all, that it recommends all its neighbours to have a dictator too. It even (or such was the case with the Italian Fascist press) *offers to lend its own dictator to its neighbour*, for a consideration; if its neighbour, in consequence of some organic obstruction in its political functioning, is unable to produce a dictator of its own. It was in this spirit that the Fascist press made the following proposal to the manifestly constipated French administration: That the two countries should amalgamate, and that Signor Mussolini should rule both. "He is a good ruler," they said; "you would find him an ideal dictator. You need a 'strong man.' We have one, you have not. Let us share this valuable 'strong man' that the Italian nature has given birth to. And let us call the new political unit the Roman Empire just for fun, and to overcome the difficulty of finding a name that would not wound traditional susceptibilities."

In the present break-up of European institutions such demological fancies abound, and the past is everted into the present. Every condottiere that arises is acclaimed as Cæsar, just as were the Free-Captains of the Renaissance. Mussolini is better placed, however, than was Cæsar Borgia,

to reconstitute a Roman dominion, because he not only has Romagna, but the whole of Italy. And there is certainly some chance that he could conquer Gaul, in its present state, without much more trouble than it gave Cæsar Borgia to conquer Urbino. Already an extravasated flood of sunburnt Italians is pushing up into Southern France, left empty by the exodus to the towns. They are advancing upon Paris much more quickly (since they are reported to be gaining ground at about the rate of a kilometre a week) than the Greman army succeeded in doing. As to France, its old peasant virtues of economy and soberness are rapidly disappearing, its rentier class is being rapidly smashed up and despoiled by every method of class-hate and inquisition, its countryside is being emptied, and a characterless, nondescript, industrial population created, all dragooned into revolution. The moment seems propitious for a *coup d'état* of the sort suggested, much simpler and quicker than a war. If Mussolini *flew* to Paris in one of the swiftest Fascist aeroplanes, and entered the Elysée, in all probability he would be able at once to assume office. The mere spectacle of Italy's "strong man" descending majestically from the clouds, and standing in the attitude of the victor of Austerlitz on the balcony of the presidential palace, would probably suffice.

It is at this juncture that the Prime Minister of England also gets into a *roman* mood.

Mr. Baldwin, as well as Signor Mussolini, turns to history, for a different motive it is true. But both are disposed to encourage a mood that would base itself on the Rome of antiquity, both caress the memories of Western Empire. He (Mr. Baldwin), however, owing to his geographical position, is, more than Mussolini, reversing the method of Tacitus. Tacitus pointed *away* from imperial Rome and *towards* the wild German tribes to indicate a Utopia. Mr. Baldwin, from the midst of the still rather savage German North, points to Rome and its empire.

But a doubt assails Mr. Baldwin, or he allows a doubt entrance to his Roman picture. The Briton is the natural heir of the Roman. But what if (as many people say) there are not enough Britons left to go round? "There are fears among those who are responsible for government to-day

- . . . that the Great War, by the destruction of our best lives in such numbers, has not left enough of the breed to carry on the work of the Empire." (As reported in *Times*, January 9th, 1926.) This doubt is an unworthy one: but it also, in face of a population of 40 million Britons, is a rather strange one for a Prime Minister, or anyone else, to have. It would be much nearer the mark, actually, to affirm that there are *too many* Britons to go round, rather than *too few*. Enough is as good as a feast, and there are a lot of Britons—there are indeed one million and a quarter out of work—there are one million and a quarter for whom not even the meanest occupation can be found; let alone lucrative administrative posts on the staff required to run a great empire.

But Mr. Baldwin evidently means something else by Britons.

The original Roman, in imperial Rome, was in much the same position as the million and a quarter Britons more or less existing on the dole to-day. Several hundred thousand Romans of true Roman blood were penniless, too proud to work, and existed on the pieces of food that were dropped into their sportula by the steward of their patron. In every sense in the first century or two of the empire the "Orontes had long flowed into the Tiber." The New Rich of that day, the millionaire Freedmen, and the Emperor of the moment—engaged in constant warfare with the senatorial caste—ruled in Rome. But although the true Romans became fewer and fewer, as a result of hardship, the vices of an idle life, child exposure and so forth, they nevertheless, like the Britons to-day, were in sufficient numbers to form an "imperial race." The only thing was that they had no money, and consequently no power: and hence they had not much opportunity of being an "imperial race" in anything but name.

Many people have believed that this unfortunate state of affairs was due to the fact that the Asiatic slaves, who amassed great fortunes in Rome (the chef of Tiberius, for instance, became a millionaire), were more industrious and intelligent than the true blue Roman. The Roman was very good to start with as a military man, and obtained all, and more than, a military man can expect to get. But his imperial destinies imported new factors into his life with which he was not so

able to cope as he was with matters of military administration and the organising of warfare. There arrived a time when he got into the same fix as the English country gentleman, that comic amateur lawyer the Justice of the Peace, that self-willed but lazy clown whom Arnold called "the Barbarian." The expert stepped in and he had to rely more and more on a type of brains and initiative that was not his *forte*. For "reading and thinking" the Roman had "no great turn," like the most imperialistic of his children. And so the big plum he had cut off with his sword he had to stand by and watch others stealing from him and enjoying.

What is probably meant, under these circumstances, by *not enough Britons left?* Perhaps some conventional notion of a "hereditary ruling class decimated in the Great War" is in Mr. Baldwin's mind. But that ruling class was mostly the embattled grandchildren of the Childs, the Kenyons, the Barings, etc., of a couple of hundred years ago, of a new-rich banker, attorney and mercantile aristocracy, who could very easily be replaced by any number of equally genuine Britons, at present *on the dole*.

If every year, as a spectacular popular measure, 50 per cent. of the Birthday Honours were bestowed on English men and women at present existing on the dole—such citizens, of which there are any number, as could satisfy the most exacting National Fascist as to their pure British descent—*then* at least English Prime Ministers would speedily find themselves surrounded in their high office by a truly imperial breed: especially if, by Act of Parliament, any newly-created Baron or Baronet, whose patent depended in the first place on an honourable poverty, was forbidden to fall victim to the charms of Jewish sirens, who would undoubtedly attempt almost immediately to deflect this unpolluted stream into less desirable, if even purer, hoarier, channels, for the sake of the patent of nobility. Until then, or till some such arrangement is entered into by the British Government, no British Prime Minister is quite consistent when he allows himself publicly to ruminate on the scarcity of Britons. There are *too many* Britons—not *too few*—far too many Britons, far too many dispossessed, penniless, pure-blooded Britons.

These observations, although they tend to show that Mr.

Baldwin's Britons are a little shadowy, or, alternatively, far, far too substantial, where he would have them shadowy; rather a million living deaths heads (in spite of *the luxuries of the dole*) than a million ghosts from the battlefields—in spite of that we can take his words to mean something tangible. And they can with advantage be associated with the words of the Fascist press. Both the English Prime Minister and the Italian press are rather like people talking in their sleep. For Mr. Baldwin always gives that impression, in any case; and the Fascist press speaks with such an eerie unanimity and is, so the special correspondents tell us, so little read on this account by Italians,—is so much the voice of *one man*, that it seems alone and talking to itself, as well, vociferating in a rather dream-like world into which only Fascist objects are admitted.

Mr. Baldwin is to-day for many Englishmen something in the nature of a White Hope. Amongst the crowd of blackguards or merely harassed timid office-boys who compose the usual office-holders to-day outside the Socialist ranks, people feel that in him they have an honest person who cannot be intimidated and who can be guaranteed to work in the interests of his nation and his countrymen. This is so very rare that he is in the nature of a phenomenon.

Mr. Baldwin, on his side, is no doubt conscious of the eccentricity of his position. Some are born eccentric, and some have eccentricity thrust upon them. The Prime Minister is so plain and blunt that he probably regards being "a phenomenon" as a rather eerie experience: he probably feels himself so like such great crowds of people that to be so *solitary* must strike him as uncanny. This may account for the curious impression he produces of a man speaking to himself—when by all the rights of the matter he should be speaking, when he speaks, for great multitudes of people similar to himself.

It is perhaps in consequence of this that he arrived at his notion of an empty world: the notion that there are no Britons left! This might be interpreted to mean (in the mode of auto-speech already noticed): "Hallo! Not many Baldwins about! Where have all the other Baldwins got to, I wonder? It is a funny thing when you come to think of it,

that there are so few Baldwins in sight! S'pose they've all been killed off in the Great War, or something."

That may be how he arrived at his curious utterance.

It is of some importance to press for definition, however, and arrive at a point where "Britons" can be referred to without the uncertainty that usually attends the employment of that term. When anybody says that *perhaps there are not enough Britons left*, could we under any circumstances be sure that he has in his mind a classification approaching in exactitude to what would satisfy even the most slovenly naturalist?

Even a layman, let alone a naturalist, discriminates very easily between Bees and Wasps, for instance, or between one kind of Ant and another. But can we assert with any confidence, when we say Briton (if we had reason to use that curiously unreal blustering term) that we should be approaching the scientific nicety achieved in the classifications "Wasp" and "Bee"? Or should we be only meaning something emotional, of wooly indiscreet contour—beginning nowhere and ending nowhere in particular?

Without attempting any classifications, it may be of service to analyse the term Briton a little further for the convenience of future Prime Ministers; not those rhetorical Britons who would never under any circumstances be slaves, but the phantom Briton that persists in dense masses around us.

". . . the gods are said to love those who die young; but nobody has ventured to make such an assertion of States," Maine says in his *Popular Government*. The test and condition of success for any government—which a Democracy as much as a Monarchy has to satisfy—*is the preservation of the national existence.* That is such a very profound remark that it claims our particular attention. "The first necessity of a State is that it should be durable. . . . The prayers of nations to Heaven have been, from the earliest ages, for long national life . . . life like that of the everlasting hills. The historian will sometimes speak of governments distinguished for the loftiness of their aims, and the brilliancy of the talents which they called forth, but doomed to an existence all too brief. The compliment is in reality a paradox, for in matters of government all objects are vain

and all talents wasted, when they fail to secure national durability. One might as well eulogise a physician for the assiduity of his attendance and the scientific beauty of his treatment when the patient has died under his care."

The only condition a government has to fulfil to be called successful is to assure a hoary national old age to the nation, Maine thought, or that is the supreme condition of its success. This strikes you at once as a great truth. But, when you think about it for a moment, it seems rather a strange one.

It will perhaps be interesting to associate with this assertion of Sir Henry Maine's another equally profound one of Ernest Renan's. In his *Histoire des Israëlites* he asks what a "nation" in reality is, and decides that it is, in fact, its ruling class. It is only the small caste at the top that has definition, consciousness and power enough to be representative of the nation. The rest of the nation is a falling away from, a progressive blurring of, that clear-cut image at the top.

But the ruling *class* is usually of a different *race*, to start with, from that of the subject population. So the difficulty of knowing what exactly you mean by "a nation" becomes, if you accept Renans' account, more and more perplexing. Probably what Maine meant by his good government and the *duration* of the state was simply, and in other language, the upholding of the power of the ruling class. The ruling class *is* the nation: "Wherever there is an ascendant class, a large portion of the morality of the country emanates from its class interests, and its feeling of class-superiority," says Mill: and, whatever the disparity in race or traditions of the ruling class and of the ruled, *the ascendant class is "the nation."*

But to-day it is very difficult to say that "the nation" has disappeared, as it were, because for so long now the ruling class has been so much of the same blood and character as the mass of the people. The best rulers are probably always distinguished foreigners, and the more foreign the better; and it is doubtful if the Irish or the Scotch are foreign enough to provide a genuine ruling class for England. It is no doubt a profound instinctive grasp of these truths that causes the left wing of the British Socialists to seek for leadership in Moscow. It is probably felt by the British Communists that the Sovietic chiefs (apart from the fact that they have

demonstrated their ability *to rule* as no other government has in Europe, except, perhaps, the Fascist) are *foreign* enough to make (if they would send over a picked band of administrators) an excellent ruling class. And no one would dispute the fact that the British Islands were badly in need of a ruling class at present.

It is very difficult to know at any given time of exactly what complexion, stature and instincts is "the Imaginary Man" which is the State. There is an unorganised unity which is *the race*—the white race, for instance—which is often far more real, and would be much more powerful if it had an objective political existence, than that curious mongrel we call "a nation."

When Sir Henry Maine says (in his Rede Lecture, 1875) that "*Civilisation* is nothing more than a name for the old order of the Aryan World," he is reaching a biologic level of a much profounder nature than when he is considering "the nation" and its probably uninteresting longevity. But race is a subject that is taken so much for granted, or else neglected as hardly a respectable subject of conversation, that it is little understood. So political thinkers will go on to the end of the chapter discussing that half-breed, "the nation," or that shoddy snobbish abstraction, "the class"—as those things exist to-day, and neglect a far deeper reality, which ultimately must assert itself in spite of political neglect.

Behind Mr. Baldwin's picture, where the absence of Boys of the Bulldog Breed is stressed, is the wider picture, undoubtedly, of a much vaster event—steadily obscured by this parochial jingoism of the Baldwin-Belloc order. It is a day of reckoning, no doubt; and it is perhaps as well that those responsible for what must happen on the wide stage, should disappear from the small one as well as the great one, before the consummation of the event. In his extremely witty book, *The Defence of Usury*, Jeremy Bentham displayed his powers of prevision to a remarkable degree, addressing his thriftless countrymen on their attitude to usury.

"The business of a moneylender," he says, "has nowhere, at any time, been a popular one. Those who have the resolution to sacrifice the present to the future, are natural objects of envy to those who have sacrificed the future to the present.

The children who have eat their cake are the natural enemies of the children who have theirs . . . . by the time the money is spent . . . . the benefactor is found to have changed his nature, and to have put on the tyrant and the oppressor."

The European is undoubtedly that man who does not sacrifice (or has not sacrificed in the past) the present to the future. Loaded with debts, the victim of his stupid scorn of usury (or thought for the future which it implies)—behold *the future* is here!

Both Mr. Baldwin and the Fascist organism are dreaming of Rome, and talking in their sleep, to some extent, then. The French who up till now have been the most wide awake of any European people, are slowly sinking into a coma. They may be "confidently expected" soon to begin dreaming as well, and inevitably they will dream of *Rome*. (It has been definitely evinced that when exhausted and falling asleep a European society always dreams of Rome).

Under these conditions, it seems a very natural proceeding to join up these dreams and dreamers. It would save time, or rather space, if they all dreamt *as one man*, instead of occupying different sites, and commanding different sets of machinery for doing the same thing.

Anyone reading the Italian Fascist suggestion of a Roman Empire composed of France and Italy must have felt that these two countries, even joined together, could hardly hope to reproduce the splendour of the Rome of antiquity. But if England entered into the arrangement it would be a very different matter. England would at once change this confederation into something truly imperial: for it would bring the British Empire with it.

This arrangement should recommend itself to Englishmen from every point of view. Foreigners of some sort have to be found if a truly ruling class is to be obtained, as has been suggested above. The Socialist Party (Communist wing) has its eye on Moscow. It thinks it has found in the Sovietic ruling class material for an excellent English ruling class. That is its solution of the problem: it thinks that England's pressing need of rulers and administrators can best be met in that way.

Now, if by a natural transition from his own spontaneous notion to that of the Fascist press, Mr. Baldwin, merging his views with those of Mussolini, were persuaded of the desirability of meeting the Roman dictator half-way, and joining the destinies of England to those of Italy and France: then an alternative solution to that of the Socialist Party (Communist wing) would be provided. Instead of going to Soviet Moscow, the British people could find their natural leaders (sufficiently "foreign" and no doubt willing to govern them) nearer home: namely, in Fascist Rome.

In any arrangement of this sort France would be the stumbling block: as (in spite of the even severer bloodletting in France's case in the recent war) there are still many Frenchmen left, with very little "sense of realities." Probably the best way to overcome this difficulty would be for all to meet half-way in France. Signor Mussolini would be crowned, and invested as Cæsar, at Paris, and the New Roman Empire would be administered from the Elysée. The senatorial caste (at the head of which would be Senator Marconi, of course) would be almost entirely Italian. And an Italian Proconsul could be established in Downing Street or elsewhere and a Fascist nobility supply the long-felt British need.

Notes for a Study of Sade.

By EDGELL RICKWORD.

The terms of the social contract have not become any less obscure since Sade analysed the conditions of existence down to a basis of mutual extermination. The corpse is for Sade the beginning just as much as the end of life, for he could see no justification for a scale of values in which the human organism came out on top and humbled man to the level of the vermin whose existence is bounded by the limits of his putrefaction.

He ordered that his own grave should be dug in a coppice on the edge of his estate, that no stone should mark the place, and that acorns should be strewn on the earth to hasten the obliteration of his memory. There is here both pride and sensibility for, though his systems were built on an assumption of unbridled egotism, he had so sincere a vision of the procession of phenomena that he realised even his own destruction as the return of so much energy to the plastic force of the universe. It would not be difficult to gild with a little rhetoric the tarnished reputation of Sade; to exhibit him for his integrity, which is such a contrast to the opportunism of the ordinary self-deceiving man, as a hero or a saint. But that is a paradox which could only please the sheep of the speculative flock who merely transvaluate the moral judgment, gnawing the fresh-turned side of their transcendental mangel-wurzel. It is therefore a matter for indifference whether the aberrations Sade depicted were intended only as illustrations to an intellectual argument (which purpose in fact they serve) or were phantasies which he would have enacted in flesh and blood had he had the power and the liberty. Hermann Hesse says of the Karamazoffs that "they were prepared to commit any crime, but they only commit them exceptionally because as a rule it suffices for them to have thought of crime or to have dreamt of it, to have made their soul a confidant

of its possibility." (1) But the road to action must be left open or the problem of conduct will have been side-tracked.

Sade's two recorded offences (committed under the old régime), for the second of which he was imprisoned in the Bastille, are not conclusive evidence against the view that he was by nature introverted ; their conception was comparatively unambitious, their execution unexpectedly clumsy. Sade was not at all cunning, but rather naive, as is shown by his earnest attempts to get his social ideas embodied in the republican code—such for instance as the view that the man who was robbed should be punished and not the thief—a spartan revision which did not catch the fancy of the army-contractors as it might have done. Sade, as a political prisoner, was released from confinement by the revolution, and he might have retained his liberty had he not been so rash as to publish, in 1800, a novel called " Zoloë et ses deux Acolytes," in which the characters of Napoleon and Josephine, who filled the principal rôles, were drawn with more acumen than a dictator finds tolerable in a contemporary. This episode cost him confinement in a mental hospital for the remaining thirteen years of his life, though he had invited it by a previous folly, no doubt the effect of his proselytising fervour ; that of sending an illustrated edition de luxe of the notorious " Justine " to each of the five chiefs of the Directorate. Napoleon is reported to have flung his copy into the fire with expressions of disgust.

Qui fait le dégoûté montre qu'il se croit beau.

But there are not fewer corpses on the road to Moscow than even in Sade's imagination.

* * *

Most of Sade's surviving romances were written during his stay in the Bastille 1784-89. In his interim of freedom he wrote plays, one or two of which were put on without much success. In the hospital at Charenton he enjoyed a good deal of liberty, and could even entertain people of his own social position. The theatre was his principal consolation at this period, a fact which roused the spleen of the chief medical officer, owing to whose complaints Sade was moved to a

(1). In Sight of Chaos. *Translated by* Stephen Hudson.

place having fewer amenities. An extract from an official letter written by this doctor gives a notable impression of Sade's circumstances at the time.

"M. de Sade enjoys too great a liberty here. He is in touch with a considerable number of people of both sexes; he can entertain them in his apartment or visit them in their respective rooms. He is allowed to walk in the park and there he meets invalids who have the same privilege. He preaches his horrible doctrine to some, to others he lends books. Moreover, it is rumoured in the institution that he lives with a woman who passes as his daughter. Even this is not all. They have been imprudent enough to arrange a theatre in this institution with the intention of having plays performed by the mentally afflicted without considering the dreadful effects such an exciting display must necessarily produce on their imagination. M. de Sade directs this theatre. It is he who chooses the plays, casts the actors and leads the rehearsals. He is elocution instructor to both actors and actresses and teaches them the art of the stage. When there are public performances he always has a certain number of entrance tickets at his disposal and from his position in the middle of the audience he does in part the honours of the place. On great occasions he is even author; on the birthday of the Superintendent, for instance, he always takes pains to compose an allegorical piece in his honour or some complimentary couplets at least." (1)

* * *

Sade is, of course, by no means the originator of the premises which he carries to their logical extreme. Moralists have never been lacking who would expose to incredulous men the selfish roots of their apparently disinterested actions and prove that morality is the slave of custom like itself, bred of physiology and environment. Montaigne and Larochefoucauld are obvious predecessors among the moderns, and a remarkable and hardly accidental parallel may be found in Mandeville. "The Fable of the Bees" was very well known in France in the first half of the eighteenth century (the

(1) Quoted by Guillaume Appollinaire "L'Oeuvre du Marquis de Sade," from which book the other quotations are taken, unless a different source is noted.

translation was burnt by the common hangman), and Mandeville's perspicacious pamphlet, "A Modest Defence of Stews," had a wide circulation as "La Vénus populaire." This work may very well have suggested to Sade his much more elaborate scheme for the provision of *maisons publiques*. Mandeville though, is much subtler in his analysis of social stratagems, he has a lively humour and is without the confounded didacticism which is always breaking out in Sade; in fact, he understood the complications of human emotions much better than Sade did. He was an empiricist where Sade is an absolutist.

* * *

The anti-social hero, who is such a prominent actor in later nineteenth century literature and thought (Dostoevsky, Nietzche, Rimbaud and Lautréamont come to mind at once), is always present as the starting-point of Sade's sociological divagations. A paragraph on law in "La Philosophie dans le Boudoir" summarises what is elsewhere elaborated, illustrated and extended :—

". . . les lois ne sont pas faites pour le particulier, mais pour le général, ce qui les met dans une perpétuelle contradiction avec l'intérêt personnel, attendu que l'intérêt personnel l'est toujours avec l'intérêt général. Mais les lois, bonnes pour la société, sont très mauvaises pour l'individu qui la compose ; car, pour une fois qu'elles le protègent ou le garantissent, elles le gênent et le captivent les trois quarts de sa vie ; aussi l'homme sage et plein de mépris pour elles les tolère-t-il comme il fait des serpents et des vipères qui, bien qu'ils blessent ou qu'ils empoisonnent, servent pourtant quelquefois dans le médicine ; il se garantira des lois comme il fera de ces bêtes venimeuses ; il s'en mettra à l'abri par des précautions, par des mystères, toutes choses facile à la sagesse et à la prudence."

* * *

A rough and ready, but, for the purpose, efficient metaphysic can be found. In Sade in "Justine ou les Malheurs de la Vertu," a cut-throat chief tries to persuade the heroine to his perverse desires by an argument which begins from principles more abstract than were actually called for in the circumstances :—

" Non, Thérese, non, il n'est point de Dieu, la Nature se suffit à elle-meme, elle n'a nullement besoin d'un auteur, cet auteur supposé n'est qu'une décomposition de ses propres forces, n'est que ce que nous appelons dans l'école une pétition de principes. Un Dieu suppose une création, c'est-a-dire un instant où il n'y eut rien, ou bien un instant où tout fut dans le cahos. Si l'un ou l'autre de ces états était un mal, pourquoi votre Dieu le laissait-il subsister ? Etait-il un bien, pourquoi le change-t-il ? Mais si tout est bien maintenant, votre Dieu n'a plus rien à faire : or, s'il est inutile peut-il être puissant, et s'il n'est pas puissant peut-il être Dieu ; si la Nature se meut elle-meme enfin, à quoi sert le moteur ? Et si le moteur agit sur la matière en la mouvant, comment n'est-il pas matiere lui-même ? Pouvez-vous concevoir l'effet de l'esprit sur la matière et la matière recevant le mouvement de l'esprit qui lui-même n'a point de mouvement ? Examinez un instant, de sang-froid, toutes les qualitiés ridicules et contradictoires . . . ." and so on to the peroration which is an anything but cold-blooded examination of the " deistic phantom."

It follows that Nature defined as the universe of matter in movement is the sum of all possible experience, and that sensation is the sole possible mode of experience ; the sentient organism must be a purely autonomous unit. The only attribute of Nature being movement, all values are indifferent to it, since sooner or later every organism must return to the common stock the energy which it has stored up for its individual satisfaction. But there is, perhaps, a greater mystery beneath this delirious circulation of destruction and growth, the contemplation of which excites Sade to the pitch of visionary speech :—

" Le projet horrible (a deliberate fire) du lendemain s'exécuta. Les trente-sept hopitaux furent consumés, et plus de vingt mille âmes y perirent. ' Oh ! sacredieu ! dis-je à Olympe, qu'il est divin de se livrer à de tels écarts ! Inexplicable et mystérieuse Nature, s'il est vrai que ces délits t'outragent, pourquoi donc m'en délectes-tu ? Ah ! garce, tu me trompes peut-être comme je l'etait autrefois par l'infâme chimère déifique à laquelle on te disait soumise ; nous ne dépendons pas plus de toi que de lui. Les causes sont peut-être inutiles aux effets, et nous tous, par une force aveugle

aussi stupide que nécessitée nous ne sommes que les machines ineptes de la végétation, dont les mystères, expliquant tout le mouvement qui se fait ici-bas, démontrent également l'origine de toutes les actions des hommes et des animaux."

* * *

Sade places his positive value on the destructive impulses because, he would say, they ensure a swifter return to Nature of the raw material of which it is in need, breaking down the more complex organisms into simpler ones. But this seems to be a value derived from sensibility alone, for there is no reason to believe that the energy pent up in the body of a man is abstracted from Nature ; rather, the more complex organisations enable more energy to be expended, mass for mass, than simpler ones. If the end of existence is the running down of this natural, universal movement to a zero-level, stillness, then for this a poet would seem to be more effective than the same weight of maggots.

The illogical judgment is a clue to temperament. In spite of Sade's appearance of being a sensationist, a pursuer of whatever may excite or stimulate the nerves, his implacable hostility to the object of passion shows that he is actually seeking to annihilate the concept of perception. Freud suggests in " Beyond the Pleasure-Principle " that when an organism ostensibly seeks pleasure, its real desire is a release from the pressure of, physically, the sexual glands, metaphysically, the world of phenomenon . . . a womb-like state in which there would be no differentiation between the subject and the concept, such as would exist in Sade's cosmos with the cessation of the individual consciousness.

A similar nostalgia for a paradisal condition, when the burden of identity, which seems in modern life to be accentuated beyond the tension which the organism is meant to bear, is a very frequent concept in modern art. In Baudelaire, for instance,

> Je jalouse le sort des plus vils animaux . . .
> Tant l'écheveau du temps lentement se dévide !

and, less directly, but more subtly, in many other poems ; in the last verses of Rimbaud ; in the scoriant vision of Maldoror where he imagines that he has sat motionless for so long that his lower limbs have sunk back into the vegetative

life. The popularity of Schopenhauer is, perhaps, due to his expression of a similar sensibility. His Will, the root of all evil, does not differ essentially from Sade's "Nature," and his doctrine of asceticism as a means of circumventing the pain of consciousness is only sadism seen the other way round—directed inwards to frustrate impulse instead of outwards to disperse it—that is, masochism. Both terms have an evil sound to popular prejudice, which is rather unreasonable as in one or other of these directions all impulses must move.

* * *

In the phantasmal world of Sade's romances the moral platitude is elaborated and illustrated with the audacity and inventiveness of the dream-power. The futility of virtue, its fatal contradiction by the actual workings of the world of matter which makes it a source of pain and disappointment to those who try to carry out its ludicrous code, and the fact that this virtue is, after all, only a round about way of getting what we want, persuade him that it is better to yield directly to impulse, no matter what the consequences to others. Compassion is a bug-bear against which the Marquis exerts all his eloquence :—

"Rejetez, détestez donc les perfides conseils du chevalier ; en vous disant d'ouvrir votre cœur à tous les maux imaginaires de l'infortune, il cherche à vous composer une somme de peines qui, n'étant pas les vôtres, vous déchireraient bientôt en pure perte. Ah ! croyez, Eugénie, croyez que les plaisirs qui naissent de l'apathie valent bien ceux que la sensibilité nous donne ; celle-ci ne sait qu' atteindre dans un sens le cœur que l'autre chatouille et bouleverse de toutes parts."

This certainty of the absolute identity of the individual, his isolation, is the basis of the sadistic morality ; on the other hand, Schopenhauer says, "it is precisely the (this) recognition of oneself in an alien phenomenon from which, as I have so often proved, justice and human love directly proceed, which leads finally to the surrender of the Will." Fusion, brotherhood, self-sacrifice, humanitarianism and so many of the emotional currents which have swept modern European democracies, from Rousseauism onwards, can be traced to this source—English middle-class Socialism (distinct from

proletarian envy-revolts), Toc H., Keyserling, etc., are all forms of expression in which the identity can be diffused, almost lost touch with, in a blissful anonymity. The devastating humility which floods sometimes a character in Dostoevsky or Tolstoy, *e.g.*, Pierre in "War and Peace," is another current from the same stream, but in these great men it is matched against such a powerful identity sense that great works are produced in the struggle.

In Dostoevsky, the sadistic element gained in force as he developed, vide the terrific character of Stavrogin. For an early sketch of the *dual* nature, insight into which makes Dostoevsky so profound, see "Letters from the Underworld" —in some ways unsurpassed.

Schopenhauer constructed a positive moral value out of the fact of sacrifice, an achievement which seems hardly possible to us now:

"Every benevolent action practised from a pure motive proclaims that he who practises it stands in direct contradiction to the phenomenal world in which other individuals are entirely separate from himself, and recognises himself as identical with them. Every quite disinterested service is accordingly a mysterious action, a *mysterium*."

It must be admitted, without cynicism, that there appear to be no sufficient grounds for assuming the purity of any motive; the unique voluptuousness of self-sacrifice covers a multitude of these so-called disinterested actions—Sydney Carton's Bargain: or All for Nothing, is the *beau idéal* of emotional commerce. Charity, of course, is positively repulsive because it pretends to be what it is not, but Schopenhauer's pure benevolence assumes a donor without desire, and that, though it accords with his sole criterion of virtue, hardly seems to us to hold the notion of a moral action. Further, he says of Kant, "to support morals by means of Theism is equivalent to reducing them to egoism," but equally so is his own theory that in our fellows we see the "I once more," and that in a case of self-sacrifice for another individual "the true essence of the perishing being remains untouched, continues in the other. . . ." But though, like all the would-be not-empirical moralists, Schopenhauer leads us into a blind alley, his peculiar psychological acumen discloses a

means of escape from the extreme rigidity of the pure sadist principles. He who performs a "purely" benevolent action, he says, "stands in direct contradiction to the phenomenal world." What could be more flattering to the ego or more advantageous to its neighbours? That is an ambition which should surely result in a further differentiation of the ego and not in its absorption in the amorphous flock of those chosen people—the children of nature.

* * *

As nothing exists in ordinary life in a pure state, it is right that Sade should have given his name to a concept in psycho-pathology. Equally, his antagonist, the ubiquitous small Polish squire, von Sacher Masoch, is an abstraction, a re-agent for use in analysis which will obscure instead of revealing, unless used in appropriate quantities. Taken together, they form a picturesque diagram of the ambivalence of emotion, of the two poles towards which all impulses are orientated—life and death, fulfilment and frustration, love and hate, and all the other emotional twins. In life generally and in art particularly, it is the compound, the relation between the elements, which is the object of perception. In society it is the perpetually precarious balance in the polarity of these two forces, a balance as unstable in and between groups as in the individual, which gives that unrealiable, volcanic humour to the endless film which we watch and which we help to create. At one moment we may bask in an air of tolerance and sweet reasonableness, in which nothing seems more certain than the elaboration and extension of the achievements of the past; the next, as in 1914, and, perhaps, more sinisterly to-day, the inoffensive individual is caught up in a whirlwind which has no more regard for any mental equilibrium he may have reached than a Bank Holiday char-a-banc. For society must have a positive sadistic tendency if it is to exist in a healthy state, or the surrounding egos, races, or "lower" forms of life will absorb it for their own purposes. The policy of state-craft, probably most effective when least cognisant of the ends in view, is to sift the natural givers and the natural takers, those who suffer and bestow, and those who exert and assert, into positions where they can satisfy these tendencies, and to provide a system of easy compensations

for the dualistic majority. For the latter purpose, ideas (of honour, etc.) are not less powerful than material rewards; combined with them, they are irresistible. Thanks to the idea of justice, a wig and a slight charge on the Exchequer, we are able to cajole one anti-social element into eliminating the other. The hangman, too, is an honest citizen, though he has been getting a little queasy of late. In America, in England and even in Russia there have recently been examples of neurasthenic executioners; one of them tried to hang himself, the others simply sent in their resignations on grounds of health. But so serious does the position seem that a humane paragraphist in an evening paper suggests that citizens should fill the office in rotation, like jurymen, to relieve any single person of so much responsibility Nature is full of beautiful adjustments, the Victorians used to say, and certainly it looks as if the decline of torture and the rise of dentistry might be an example of compensation; in place of heretics and highwaymen, the Sunday papers.

In normal conditions, in a nation of industrial workers, the masochist tendency must obviously be exploited at the expense of the sadistic. So suppressed is the latter, in fact, that it rarely dares to show itself, except under cover of a crowd-emotion :—

> But when the blast of war blows in our ears,
> Then imitate the action of the tiger;
> Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood,
> Disguise fair Nature with hard-favoured rage. . .

War, the greatest of all crowd experiences, probably owes its irrationally prolonged existence to the provision it makes for both tendencies in human emotion. Under the excuse of patriotism, manliness and courage, the masochist can hug his exquisite bundle of thorns and win decorations for exceptional bravery in the discharge of his temperament. The sadist will not be found where there would seem to be most reason to expect to find him; those, at least, who have any intelligence remove themselves early in the programme to posts of minor or major authority in the Base Camps and bull-rings of the Back Area, where discipline provides them

with more docile subjects than the fear-crazy men of the enemy line, made dangerous by despair.

* * *

I have not attempted in these few notes to distinguish between the historical Sade and the derivative symbol used in psycho-analytic terminology. Another piece of evidence necessary to an extended study of the subject is the stupendous compilation of Sade's (" Les cinq cents jours de Sodome ") which includes specimens of nearly every kind of deviation of the sexual instinct known to humanity, but this is practically inaccessible. In the meantime, there is abundant evidence, in literature and in experience, for the view that the impulse which in him was developed to the degree of mania, is an essential component of the most commonplace, as well as the most exceptional expressions of vitality. Such a conclusion can only be accepted or rejected finally by a scrupulous examination of personal motives ; " instinctive " revulsion is no argument. against it

Notes and Reviews.

THE NEW CRITERION.

THE new issue of *The Criterion* (Faber & Gwyer, 5s.) contains two hundred and twenty pages, a fact which enforces one of the points made by Mr. Eliot in his lucid prefatory note—that " there is not enough good literature, even second-rate literature, to fill the pages of *any* review." Mr. Eliot goes on to enunciate a " profounder objection " to the idea of a purely literary review— " the impossibility of defining the frontiers, or limiting the context of ' literature.' " To these axioms no doubt every reader of this class of periodical will assent, as also to the constructive statement that such a review may, and ought to, include contributions of any material which should be operative on general ideas."

But not even the bulkiest review can be boundlessly eclectic, and as soon as the element of choice is introduced the question of a principle or a programme becomes paramount. Mr. Eliot rejects as obnoxious the idea of a " personal " review and the idea of a programme as antipathetic to him, nailing his colours with a few tentative tacks to the notion of a residual tendency.

These colours, though very faintly painted in, seem to approximate to those of the intellectualist reaction. A draught of this " tendency " is a very useful astringent after the intuitional debauch, but it seems to us to lack the value as a diet that it has as a medicine. Even with such a minimum of definition Mr. Eliot warns us that he is falsifying in some degree the tendency which he desires to emerge from *The Criterion*, but it would be a regrettable sacrifice if a volume of *The Criterion* deprived us of one of Mr. Eliot's essays. For a review is a very coarse medium in which to find expression for a personality, and we do not find much of Mr. Eliot or of his tendency, in this number, high as it is above the level of the ordinary literary review. Mr. Frederick Manning and Mr. Herbert Read (on Newman and Count Keyserling respectively) are the only collaborators who seem to possess the quality of pure intelligence which is the ideal set before us. The creative work springs from the very opposite force. Mrs. Virginia Woolf, Miss Gertrude Stein, Messrs. Lawrence, Huxley, and John Gould Fletcher dominate neither their medium nor their emotions ; though Mrs. Woolf has some fine isolated passages and Mr. Huxley, though his story lacks style, describes well the vivid breaks which intersperse the onset of a drunken nausea. Mr. E. H. C. Oliphant's identification of Marlowe's work in " Arden of Feversham " is a sensitive piece of reasoning with valuable results. The documentary section at the back is interesting and will no doubt

become more complete in time. *The New Criterion* comes nearer than any review we know of to holding its own with the French and German reviews, but it does not yet succeed. Considering the way in which the English mind finds expression it is to be questioned whether it will ever live up to Mr. Eliot's idea of a review, and we are doubtful whether on the whole this is a vice or a virtue in it.

THIS QUARTER, No. 2.

This Quarter is of another temper. It is edited from Milan by Ernest Walsh and Ethel Moorhead, and if we are to believe the former, " the Shakespeare and Milton and Dante of this particular period are to be found in *This Quarter*, if anywhere." This gives us confidence to believe implicitly Mr. Walsh's further dicta, particularly about his contributors with whom they are chiefly concerned. One learns, for instance, that Mr. Hemingway " began life a ripe force," that if one cares for Shakespeare, one " will care more for MacAlmon," that Mr. Walsh is Mr. G. K. Chesterton's " to a cinder " and that " you must think of Carnevali as Carnevali." Certainly Mr. Walsh has the right, which he claims, to say to us: " I believe in my people—what do you believe in ? "

It may be no longer true that good wine needs no bush, but only the most ingenuous public is impressed by a burning bush. Literature, even though it have the " force of bottled goods," or when its author " talks like a god without being a damn fool," cannot be traded in like commercial products—the buyer has more perspicacity. When, however, the contributors can be heard above the editorial drum, one can listen with interest and sometimes with pleasure.

* * *

This number of *This Quarter* " is not complete without the Anteil musical supplement, which is included in the price, and is not sold separately."

A few years ago it was apparent to all clear-sighted observers that the art movement represented in painting by cubism and vorticism, in music by the work of Stravinsky, as best exemplified in the " Sacre du Printemps " and later works, in literature by similar tendencies, was on the verge of bankruptcy, and that nothing could save it. Recent developments have justified their prevision. The cubists have now some years been trying to paint like Raphael and Ingres, Stravinsky has recently begun imitating Bach and early Beethoven, and the most representative of our younger writers show an equally decided reversion to traditionalism in some form or another. Only one little group remains, shouting the old war-cries, writing the same long manifestos and the same short works, still convinced, seemingly, that it represents the advance-guard of artistic progress, whereas it is actually quite out

of date and behind the times. It is composed for the most par, of Americans inhabiting the Montparnasse quarter of Paris, together with a cosmopolitan sprinkling of Poles, Russians, Jews, Mazagranst Grenadines, Catamites, and so forth.

The musical representative of this motley group is Mr. George Antheil, who, it may be remembered, according to the Press, recently started out to cross the Sahara desert on foot, in search of music. This singular performance has attracted far more attention than any of his music is likely to secure. It, at least, had the merit of novelty, whereas they certainly have not. His method and procedure are identically the same as those of Stravinsky, pushed a little further: the same interminable reiteration of figures and single chords, with constantly changing time signatures, as in the so-called Airplane Sonata (No. 2); the same habit of accompanying a simple diatonic tune with a single chord consisting of a cluster of semi-tones, in the extreme bass, as at the beginning of the extract from the first violin sonata. The Chamber Symphony, again, is obviously imitated from Stravinsky's "Symphonies d'instruments à vent," and so on throughout all the examples given, except the last, consisting of a few pages from a opera based upon an episode from Mr. Joyce's "Ulysses," in which he writes for a voice delivered through an electric amplifier with an accompaniment of mechanical pianos, xylophones, a gramophone, bass drums, electric buzzers, an auto-siren, pieces of steel, and two electric motors, recalling the futurist experiments with "bruiteurs" many years ago. There is nothing new in all this—only the old, old game of trying to *épater le bourgeois* which has been going on for the last hundred years. Surely it is time to think of something else, if only because the bourgeois refuses to be shocked any more?

Notes on Music.

(VI)—MONTEVERDI'S *ORFEO.*

Of all periods of musical history, the beginning of the seventeenth century is perhaps the most interesting to the student, and the least interesting to the ordinary listener. From that period dates the inception of opera—at least in the modern sense of the word—the development of purely instrumental music, and the growth of modern tonal and formal principles. Yet practically none of the music of that time has survived to-day in our concert halls or opera houses. In other words, its interest for us is primarily, if not entirely, historical, not æsthetic. If there is one composer of that time, however, who is still something more than a name, in spite of the fact that his works are seldom if ever per-

formed, it is surely Claudio Monteverdi; and of all his works the one which most excites our imagination and curiosity is the opera *Orfeo*. The recent revival of this work at Oxford was therefore of surpassing interest and importance. Was there any chance of its surviving the test of this performance, or was it, despite all its legendary prestige, only a museum piece, like nearly all the rest of the music of its time?

If, in Parliamentary language, "the answer to the first part of the question is in the negative," it does not necessarily follow that the answer to the second part is in the positive. For although one can only be grateful to the promoters for affording us the opportunity of hearing this neglected, though not forgotten, work, it cannot unfortunately be said that the production was altogether a very successful one. In the first place, the *mise-en-scène* was very much the sort of thing one would expect from a collaboration of Mr. Rutland Boughton and Mr. Ambrose Heal—that seemingly inevitable combination of Glastonbury and Tottenham Court Road which is such a distressing feature of all amateur performances, and one calculated to destroy the vitality of any work of art, whatever its period.

On the purely musical side the performance was even more open to criticisms and objections. despite the fact that we are here treading on dangerous ground, and cannot reasonably be dogmatic. The truth of the matter is that we do not really know exactly how this music was performed, or what it actually sounded like. We can only make more or less shrewd guesses, and every one is equally entitled to his opinion. The reason for this uncertainty consists in the general adoption by composers of the time of the system of notation called the figured bass, by means of which only the upper part—whether for instrument or voice—and the bass part, were written out in full. The rest of the texture was merely filled in by the accompanying instruments in accordance with very rough and perfunctory indications. The latitude permitted to the performers was thus very great, and without an accurate knowledge of the traditional methods which they must have employed, our idea of the music can only be a very pale reflection of what it actually was. It is like trying to form an idea of a building from its preliminary scaffolding or framework of girders; only the main lines can be determined with any pretence of accuracy. All the decorations and embellishments which largely constitute its character can at best only be vaguely conjectured. Or to take a closer analogy, in the same way that Raphael designed his Logge in the Vatican and left their execution to a group of highly trained assistants and pupils who could be trusted to carry out his intentions, so the composers of the seventeenth century made what was probably only intended to be regarded as a rough sketch of the work, in a kind of shorthand, which they left to the realisation of the executants. in accordance

with a definite method or tradition. In other words, the performers were, in a secondary degree, composers, and the performance literally an integral part of the work to an extent of which we have very little idea to-day. This point of view, which was once only conjecture and speculation, has recently become almost a certainty through the discovery of two scores of a single work of the period, in one of which there are definite instrumental indications for elaborating the bare figured bass which alone appears in the other. Unfortunately these indications are too vague to afford us more than a general idea of the methods employed. For more precise knowledge we can only await the highly improbable discovery in some forgotten library of a complete score of a work which we already only know in rough outline, thus providing a musical Rosetta stone which would elucidate the mysteries of the hieroglyphical script of the seventeenth century. Until then we must rely on our imagination and intuition to supply the deficiencies of our knowledge. This the producers at Oxford for the most part neglected to do, with the result that the performance bore as much relation to a living work as a skeleton in an anatomical museum bears to a living man—interesting, no doubt, to the student and the antiquarian, but not to the artist or to the ordinary man. It is indeed a remarkable fact which is difficult to explain that where the music of the preceding century is in question, in which the notation is quite precise and explicit, it seems impossible to prevent modern editors from tampering with it and adapting it in accordance with their own ideas of what it should be. But here, where the music imperatively demands some measure of re-creation and arrangement, they always insist on a literal and pedantic interpretation.

Again, the orchestral combination for which *Orfeo* was written consisted largely of instruments which are now obsolete, or at least no longer in general use. As it would therefore admittedly be impracticable to have the work performed by the combination for which it was conceived, two alternatives present themselves. Firstly, one can arrange the music for a more or less conventional combination, with a result comparable to modernised versions of Langland or Chaucer, *i.e.*, preserving the general "sense," but entirely losing the colour and atmosphere of the original, which are just as important and perhaps even more so. This was for the most part the method followed at Oxford. Another and better way would be to attempt to reproduce the peculiar timbre of the old instruments by means of a skilful employment of modern resources. This should not be difficult, in a day when the favourite occupation of most composers is to imitate accurately and realistically the sound of barrel organs and German bands, to say nothing of the bleating of sheep and similar natural phenomena. It is the kind of task which orchestral *virtuosi* such as Strauss, Elgar, and Stravinsky, could accomplish admirably, if they could

only be persuaded to set their hand to it. They would then enrich music doubly, by depriving the world of their own, for the most part, bad works, and bringing to life again old and forgotten masterpieces. But it seems unlikely that they will take the hint.

In short, before we can take it for granted that this music is dead beyond any hope of resurrection, it would first be necessary to hear a performance of it given by a musician who had saturated himself in the music of the period, who was acquainted with all the theoretical writings of the period, and with descriptions of the music and its effect in contemporary literature, who possessed an accurate knowledge of the tone-quality and technical capacities of obsolete instruments, and who was himself not only a creative musician of considerable attainments, but one in temperamental sympathy with the particular composer.

If such a paragon were ever forthcoming, it is impossible to doubt that this music, which seems so dead to us to-day, would be as alive again as any great music written before or since. But until then it is better to leave it in the decent obscurity of our museums and libraries, where a few scholars and enthusiasts can occasionally in imagination hear again these passionate accents which once enthralled the world, rather than to drag it forth unceremoniously, a jangling skeleton, into the light of day in order to satisfy our morbid curiosity. Is it not indecent, almost, to poke the skinny finger of antiquarianism among these poor bones which once lived with such intensity? But let no one think that they are really dead. The work of art which has once lived as truly as *Orfeo* can never die.

CECIL GRAY.

HICKEY'S LAST PARTY*

When Mrs. Smith, fresh from England, entered Mr. Hickey's dining-room at Calcutta, she "gave a violent start and drew back." The company were apprehensive she was indisposed, but as soon as she got to know them better she explained: "Such a large party of gentlemen assembled, such a crowd of attendants, a table splendidly covered, and such an extraordinary blaze of light, coming, too, as she did, from utter darkness, she was wholly overcome, feeling as if she should faint." Well might she start, and even we, who should be accustomed by now to Hickey's lavishness, can scarce restrain a nervous reaction. It is volume four of the Memoirs—the fourth and last—yet still the spell works. Never mind if the table is vulgar and the lights garish, and the gentlemen eminently second-rate. Never mind the fevers and duels that carry them off, never mind if their mistresses and illegitimate children expire in agonies. Suffering from the toothache, Mr.

* Memoirs of William Hickey. Vol. iv (1790-1809).

MacNaughten seizes a carving knife and hacks at his gums. Septic poisoning results, but never mind. Colonel Auchmuty shouts up the stairs to his wife, " Shela, my jewel, why Shela, I say, take care, I say, of the spoons and silver forks, count them up carefully, my honey, for by the Holy Jesus we have got some tight boys here to-day ! " The servants steal as well as the tight boys ; the trusted Chaund imports prostitutes and all get dead drunk upon the master's claret and sprawl over his furniture. And young Mr. Blunt—being a clergyman, will he not exercise a moderating influence ? No. Mr. Blunt is even more remarkable than his lay colleagues. Appointed to a chaplaincy, he rushes stark naked from his cabin after he has been two days at sea and dances before " both soldiers and sailors, singing scraps of the most blackguard songs." When he comes to himself, his concern is extreme ; not even Colonel Wellesley, the Commanding Officer of the regiment, can comfort him. Colonel Wellesley puts off expressly from another boat to say, " that what had passed was not of the least consequence, as no one would think the worse of him, and no blame ought to attach to a cursory debauch." But Mr. Blunt will not take this sensible view, the shadows of the nineteenth century fall on him ; he frets, and ten days later is a corpse—but never mind ! Mrs. Smith, fresh from her northern twilight, may start, but we should be inured by this time to the jollity and vulgarity and death.

Did Hickey himself ever mind anything, as he sat at Beaconsfield invalided " home," and writing up his extraordinary journal ? There had been two great emotions in his life, Charlotte Barry and Bob Pott, but Charlotte is dead and Bob dies unchronicled. Jemdaree has died, too, and so have the friends who called her " the gentle and kind Fatty." As the old boy looked back at his jumble of a career and particularly at the Indian fragments of it, what significance could it have had to him ? Why, none at all, no significance at all, he is not that type of observer. He is not philosophic or profound. He just writes ahead, remembering vividly when necessary, but never concerned to discover a meaning, or to draw lessons from his failure or success. He had been, on the whole, a Calcutta attorney, and had ended as Under-Sheriff and Keeper of the Jail. Some men have achieved less ; others more. He puts it all down, unmoved in spite of his liveliness. No yearnings disturb him. He is so second-rate that he does not realise the difference between seconds and firsts, and this makes him happy, restful, dignified. Turn off the raptures of heaven and hell. Leave, as sole illumination for its universe, the " extraordinary blaze of light " that falls upon a bachelor dinner-table. Hickey looks very well now. He does not want to be anywhere else or among better people, and when Miss Seymour cries, " Mr. Hickey, you are an old man now, I need not lock my bedroom door," he cannot understand why Sir Henry Russell should look shocked.

Well, this is the last party he will ever give. Back he goes

to his Maker, in the middle of compiling a list of passengers who have been drowned at sea. Where he himself died, and what he looked like, we do not know. Off he goes without offering any opportunity for reflection, which is one of the reasons why we like him so much. He has never been pretentious or insincere ; he has never regretted or repented, or said " I have lived " or " I have served England in my little way," or " I, too, have felt the lure of the East." How pleasant it would have been to have met him, and how strange it is to realise that one has often met him and fled from him. For he must be reincarnate to-day in many a smoking-room, many an overseas dining club or tenth-rate military mess. Though somewhat overlaid with newspapers and a bit bothered by the necessity of being all white, he is with us still. Is he still writing everything down ? Ah, that we cannot know, nor did his contemporaries know it. As a rule a Hickey does not care to keep a journal, or, if he does keep one, it is unreadable. Only now and then does he develop that strange excrescence, the power to write. The same in other ways, as soon as he takes up his pen, he enters the temple of the Muses and addresses posterity.

E. M. FORSTER.

GOGOL. By JANKO LAVRIN. The Republic of Letters. Routledge. 6s.

In this, the first extensive study of Gogol in English, Mr. Lavrin devotes more attention to the psychological origin than to the literary value of Gogol's work. The attitude is legitimate, for even if Gogol's rank be disputed, he was nevertheless the first to express much that is typical of Russian literature and the psychological prototype and model of many later Russian writers. Although Tolstoy, Turgenev and Goncharov adopted the artistic methods of Pushkin, Gogol as " the first of those self-divided Russian writers ' in whom all contradictions exist side by side,' " as " the first *seeker* (on a big and tragic scale) in Russian literature " served as the young Dostoevsky's model and throws light on Tolstoy's religious development. Mr. Lavrin, therefore, attempts to combine the æsthetic and psychological analysis in order to disentangle the contradictory elements that are the foundations of Gogol's art.

The circumstances of Gogol's early education and of his youthful experiences in Petersburg account largely for his peculiar *malaise*. Ambitious to assert himself on a scale really worth while (" cold sweat pours down my face at the idea that I shall perish in dust, without making my name known by a single remarkable deed "), he failed in all his attempts at a career. Depressed by endless and prospectless drudgery in squalid surroundings,

Gogol sought relief in an imaginative return to his native, sunny Ukraine, a region associated not only with his comfortable childhood, but also with the old Cossack traditions of rapid and careless life. In the stories of this period and in others similarly motivated, it can be seen to what an extent external phenomena were subject to modification before they could affect Gogol as stimuli. Scenery he reflects realistically as setting, but people and events are distorted in proportion and relation until they bear symbolic reference to Gogol's own internal conflict.

This symbolic distortion is characteristic of the whole of Gogol's work, including his satires. For his satires are but an inverted form of the romantic flight, an inversion due to Gogol's recognition that his mal-adjustment to life was caused at least as much by his own deficiencies as by anything in the nature of things. This recognition, implying as it does an effort on Gogol's part towards re-integration, perhaps justifies his being raised altogether out of the romantic category. Its consequence was that "his art, which at first had been stimulated by his need of a romantic shelter, gradually expanded into that struggle with reality and with himself which found its most perfect expression in *Dead Souls.*" His creative process, Gogol himself has described: "This is how I did it. Having taken some bad feature of mine or other, I persecuted it under a different name and in a different rôle . . ." How dependent his art was on his ability to project by this process the tendencies he struggled alternately to repress and re-integrate, is shown by the completeness with which his art broke down when, under the influence of a priest of narrow but powerful mind, he came to regard its exercise as sinful. Religious scruples having blocked up the avenues of escape by flight or ridicule, he sought a solution in the rationalisation that found exasperating expression in the sermonising *Selected Passages from the Correspondence with my Friends* and in frantic attempts at a "positive" art. But being far from positive himself, he was unable to project positive characters.

Nevertheless, the importance of Gogol's "negative" art is very great. How great depends entirely on the significance that is attached to his symbolic figures. In this respect it is of interest that many of Gogol's early stories are founded on incidents of folklore in which the supernatural figures largely. Indeed, "the young Gogol's imagination retained that kind of vision which is largely on the plane of peasant art, of mythology and poetic superstition." A similar regression is common in sufferers such as Gogol. How far the significance of his symbols is due to Gogol's subconscious and atavistic bond with the collective racial conscience is a point that Mr. Lavrin raises briefly but does not settle. In that respect it is typical of the stimulating but inconclusive character of his book.

C. H. Rickword.